Shepherds

MAY, 1956

COMMISSION ON
MEMBERSHIP AND EVANGELISM
IN THE
LOCAL CHURCH

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SHEPHERDS

For Commission on Membership and Evangelism in the Local Church

May, 1956

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Geo. H. Jones, *Editor*

Gordon Pratt Baker, *Editorial Associate*

Edward Ferguson, Jr., *Editorial Assistant*

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Nashville 5, Tennessee

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The Evangelistic Heritage of Methodism

by Douglas R. Chandler
Professor of Church History
Westminster Theological Seminary
Westminster, Maryland

GREAT ideas will not be silenced. They almost proclaim themselves. People who possess them "are possessed" by them. And that is how it is with the Christian gospel, for the good news about Jesus is too good to keep.

"A Cloud of Witnesses"

As the New Testament tells it, there was a "cloud of witnesses" at the beginning—people in whom the Word became flesh, as the Word had become flesh in Jesus. These were the first evangelists: angels, shepherds, fishermen, carpenters, teachers, tentmakers, doctors, tax-collectors—people who had found the new Way so exciting that they felt compelled to make converts to it. They were sowers of seed, lights of the world, leaven, salt, harvest-field laborers. So Jesus spoke of them, and from Him they caught this new idea about themselves as His disciples. The record is faultlessly clear about the intensity of this drive within them.

This communication of the gospel was Methodism's greatest concern. John Wesley's first task was to harness and direct what amounted almost to a tidal wave of witnessing enthusiasm. It began with the search within himself to save his own soul, but this was soon transformed into an earnest search for ways and means to make Christ known to others. All disappointments and failures (and there were some), he translated into lessons for improvement. He knew at once the difference between the authentic and the artificial in religion. He began with known truths, personal experiences, obvious needs, and group effort. The clever technique was secondary, sometimes adopted reluctantly, sometimes hit upon with glad surprise. The idea, the personal conviction, the commitment, the surrender to God were first.

Some words used to describe what the early Methodists were after were "holiness of heart," "perfection in love," "the new birth," "the more excellent way." Do we know what these words mean? At their best, they describe the work of God in the redemption of human beings; at their worst, they are sectarian cliches. One is amazed at the way the genuine heartwarming experience found instant expression in the social outreach toward the poor, one's enemies, and to all the evils in society. To Wesley, this was loving one's neighbor as one's self and a logical accompaniment to scriptural evangelism.

A Compelling Concern

This concern of Wesley and the early Methodists was wonderful to behold. It drove him, an Anglican priest, to preach in the fields, to disregard parish boundaries, to disobey the Bishop, to ordain preachers, to organize societies and classes, to build chapels and meeting houses, and even to say once in sheer desperation, "Church or no church, we must attend to saving souls."

How different this is from some of our vague thinking about a church being, somehow, a credit to every community! Through most of its history, Methodist evangelism has thought of Christ as more than an addition to one's cultural assets.

An Awakening

Under Wesley's leadership, the first Methodists were quick to seize every opportunity to spread the word of forgiveness and the new life. A hanging, a storm, an election, a prison sentence, a chance meeting or conversation, all were appropriate times to introduce the gospel. Thumb through the *Journal* of John Wesley and see the serious intention on every page. "I spoke with the new members—I preached—I visited the sick—I talked—I prayed—I exhorted." Every line is vivid reporting about one of the greatest revivals in history, an awakening that knew no confinement smaller than a world parish. A "drive" like this makes every hour holy, every moment momentous.

In a Church with this high resolve, there would be no "special meeting" (what a confession in those dull words!), no "special music" (it never is); for *every* service would feel the warmth and contagion of our love and faith.

There is scarcely a device or method on the history of evangelism, or in present-day communication of the gospel, that Wesley and his followers have not used. The mass-meeting and outdoor service were unique features of the early years. For the crowds who came, it was always a problem to find a house large enough; and for the people who

---

For stirring readings from the works and letters of John and Charles Wesley, SHEPHERDS *readers are referred to the new volume,* THE METHODIST FIRST READER, *by Bishop Charles C. Selecman and George H. Jones. The book has just been published by* TIDINGS.

wouldn't come, a cross-roads, a tavern, or a mine-pit sufficed. People there must be, and instructions were clear to offer the gospel where they were.

There was house-to-house visitation, insisted upon by Wesley and systematically done by all who would help him. "Though a man preach like an angel, he will neither collect nor preserve a society which is collected, without visiting them from house to house." Without this, he said, "the people will hardly increase, either in number or in grace."

Counseling, face-to-face and heart-to-heart challenge and confession, was a regular procedure with Wesley and his helpers. The children's classes, the schools in homes and in rented rooms, the small groups (the class meetings), men's meetings and women's meetings (bands), workers' conferences, all of these lively and warm with cheerful singing, animated talk, and earnest prayer, are part of the record, spelling the story of a deep concern that every person in England should have his own encounter and reconciliation with God.

Toward holding the ground gained, that is, the souls won, Methodism, by its connectional system, has provided an efficient pastoral oversight, never at loose ends except by default. This was tremendously strengthened in her early history by the class meeting, one of the most unique accompaniments to an evangelistic movement in Christian history. By this small group of from 12 to 15 persons, meeting weekly with a consecrated leader for mutual support and prayerful discussion about individual and common concerns, a truly "upper room" powerhouse at once generated and controlled their Christian enthusiasm. Cell groups of prayer and devotion are today tentative explorations in the rediscovery of this ancient and valuable method of gospel communication.

An Urgent Business

There is a true sense in which evangelism is the business of every Christian. It is also true that, as a Christian enterprise, it has, from New Testament times, called for special recruitments and supports. Wesley asked the Methodist Conference in 1769, "Who is willing to go (to America)?" The *Minutes* stated that "our brethren in New York who have built a preaching house" were in need of preachers and money.

Note here one more illustration of a great fact in the history of evangelism: laymen are the best front-line in the endeavor to spread the gospel. Here the Conference of preachers, as has been so often the case, was recognizing a work already begun by laymen.

Wesley says "a more loving Conference we never had. Two of our preachers, Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor, willingly offered themselves for the service." And to show further how "loving" the Conference was, they collected at once for the work fifty pounds "as a token of our brotherly love."

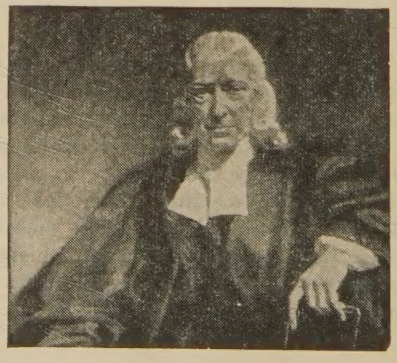
This important aspect of evangelism is less popular than some others; but in the Conference of 1769, under Wesley's eye, it was not overlooked. The communication of the gospel is more than just talking or going to meetings—or writing articles about it!

Following Boardman and Pilmoor, a steady stream of men whom we commonly call "Wesley's missionaries" made their way to the American wilderness. Joining with the leadership already here, they were inspired by a common purpose. Asbury and Strawbridge, the English "bishop" and the Irish farmer-itinerant, started that long line of American circuit-riders who have always been the symbol of tireless effort and indefatigable zeal in the saving of men.

These enthusiastic and often eccentric makers of converts knew a sinner when they saw one, and their techniques were as crude as their discernments were clear. An unrestrained and unashamed emotionalism, folk tunes with easy choruses, weepings and shoutings, and vigorous preaching helped to make the log meetinghouse, the town hall, and the one-room school centers of gospel proclamation. The point is that, after making due allowances for the crudities and drabness of frontier culture, we must admit that early Methodism produced earnest and skillful technicians in the art of winning men. Each appointment, preaching engagement, night's lodging, and Conference had this one aim in mind. Methodist history has no meaning without it, and without it contemporary Methodism is unintelligible.

The early Conferences give us a good record of this matter. At Baltimore's Lovely Lane, in 1784, our Church was being organized, and the details of a new institution in a new nation were pressing; but Jesse Lee says that the adopted rules kept the main purpose before them: "You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore, spend and be spent in this work. Observe, it is not your business to preach so many times and to take care of this or that society; but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance and with all your power to build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord."

"I . . . proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation."



This first Conference of the new Church had even more to say about the task of making Christians, pointing out one important aspect of true evangelism, "Go into every house in course, and teach everyone therein, young and old, if they belong to us, to be Christians inwardly and outwardly. Make every particular plain to their understanding; fix it in their memory; write it on their heart. In order to do this, there must be line upon line, precept upon precept. What patience, what love, what knowledge is requisite for this! Diligently instruct and vehemently exhort all parents at their own houses. Preach expressly on education." "But I have no gifts for this." "Gift or no gift, you are to do it, else you are not called to be a Methodist preacher."

A Faithful Teacher

The past is a faithful teacher. Our Methodist heritage says that the first lesson in evangelism is a knowledge of conversion, a true understanding of the meaning of discipleship and the nature of the Christian life in our time. A new vocabulary for this is always in order; but the necessity of the new birth, a new direction, a new orientation is constant, unchanging.

The second lesson is that the "spread of the gospel," as Wesley termed it, is our one reason for existence as a Church.

The third lesson is that evangelism is every Christian's business to be tried in every known way. It is both a public enterprise and a person-to-person responsibility. There must be no loopholes. Every known means of communication must be tried—preaching, psychiatry, teaching, the printed word, radio, TV. Of some, Wesley would say, as he said about the class meeting, "This is the very thing." And over and about all techniques are the words of Jesus: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Early Methodism Sang Its Way Into the Lives of Its People with

Charles Wesley: Poet of Methodist Theology

by Robert S. Hamilton
Pastor, Wesley Methodist Church
New Haven, Connecticut

SOMETIMES it seems that a few of Jesus' most familiar words should be revised to read, "Wherever two or three are gathered in my name, there is theological controversy in the midst of them." Certainly, when the two or three are ministers from different schools, that is likely to be the situation. But, if we are true to our Methodist heritage, that should *not* be the situation.

The bone of contention is usually the doctrine of man. Is man totally helpless in his depravity, or is his innate goodness sure to save him? The faith that we Methodists inherit from the Wesleys should lead us into neither of these extremes. For it is a faith which takes both of the extremes into realistic consideration and then treads a pathway safely between.

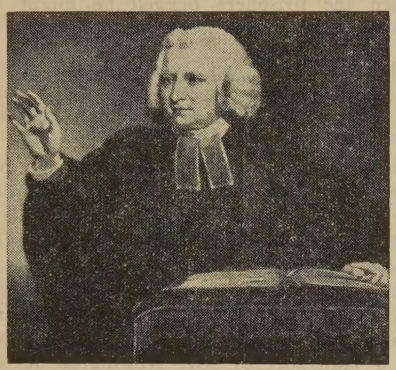
A Realistic View

The Wesleys took a realistic view of man's sinfulness. How could they logically do otherwise in the face of the brutal conditions under which men lived in their day? At the same time, however, they were not led into a dead end of despair by their realism. They had sufficient faith in the power of Almighty God to be quite sure that He would not desert His noblest creature in the hour of need. Man is, indeed, sinful. He is unable to save himself. But God can save, and in Jesus Christ He has given men the vision and power unto salvation.

The best textbook for studying our Methodist faith is one so close at hand that we usually overlook it. In every pew in every Methodist church we find it. We use it every Sunday. But often we do so without thinking of the faith and experience behind its words. *The Methodist Hymnal* is not just a songbook. It is a veritable textbook of Methodist theology. Especially in those verses from the pens of the Wesleys it reveals the heart of Methodist faith and life. A pertinent example is that most famous of Charles Wesley's 6,500 hymns, "Jesus, Lover of My Soul." A brief examination of the words and the experience behind the words will make that clear.

Three Tremendous Events

In Bailey's book, *The Gospel in Hymns*, it is suggested that three tremendous events in the years just preceding the writing of this hymn in 1739 are reflected in its verses. In Charles Wesley's *Journal* for October, 1736, there is recorded the story of his tempestuous voyage home from Georgia to England. The effects of that voyage, and of his discouragement at the time, are reflected in the first two stanzas of the hymn:



Charles Wesley

Jesus, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy Bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high:
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide;
O receive my soul at last!

Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave, ah! leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me:
All my trust on Thee is stayed,
All my help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.

Two years later, in May of 1738, came the event which was as much a turning point for Charles Wesley's life as Aldersgate was for his brother John. In the midst of physical illness and mental anguish, he had a dream which caused him to read Isaiah 40:1. Thereupon he gave himself anew to Christ and found himself at peace, assured that he was forever safe in the power of God. From that time on his physical strength returned.

Looking again at the hymn, we find this experience reflected in the first part of stanze 3:

Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
More than all in Thee I find:
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind.

Ministering in Prison

Only two months after this life-changing event, we find Wesley ministering to the condemned felons in Newgate Prison. Here, again, we find the need of man coupled with faith in the power of God. Let the story be told just as Charles Wesley wrote it:

July 12. Preached at Newgate to the condemned felons, and visited one of them in his cell, sick of a fever—a poor black that had robbed his master. I told him of One who came down from heaven to save lost sinners, and him in particular; described the sufferings of the Son of God, His sorrows, agony, and death. He listened with all the signs of eager astonishment; the tears trickled down his cheeks while he cried, "What! Was it for me? Did God suffer all this for so poor a creature as me?" I left him waiting for the salvation of God. . . .

July 17. At Newgate I preached on death (which they must suffer the day after tomorrow). At one (o'clock) I was with the black in his cell. Two more of the male-

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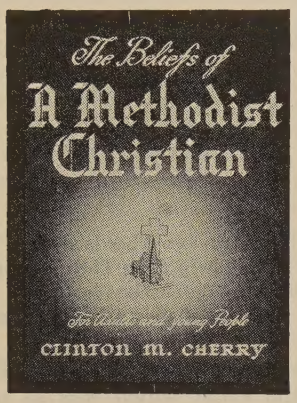

The Beliefs of a Methodist Christian

by Clinton M. Cherry

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factors came. I had great help and power in prayer. One rose and said he felt his heart all on fire so as he never found himself before; he was all in a sweat; believed Christ died for him. . . . The black was quite happy. The other criminal was in an excellent temper; believing, or on the point of it.

July 18. I administered the sacrament to the black, and eight more; having first instructed them in the nature of it. . . . At night I was locked in with Bray in one of the cells. We wrestled in mighty prayer. All the criminals were present, and all delightfully cheerful. The soldier in particular found his comfort and joy increase every moment. Another, from the time he communicated, has been in perfect peace. Joy was visible on all their faces. . . .

July 19. I rose very heavy, to visit them for the last time. At six I prayed and sang with them all together. All the ten received (the sacrament). At half-hour past nine their irons were knocked off and their hands tied. I went in a coach. By half-hour past ten we came to Tyburn, waited till eleven: then were brought the children appointed to die. I got upon the cart and Sparks and Broughton (two friends); the Ordinary (prison chaplain) endeavored to follow, when the prisoners begged he might not come; and the mob kept him down.

I prayed first, then Sparks and Broughton. We had prayed before that our Lord would show there was a power superior to the fear of death. They were all cheerful; full of comfort, peace and triumph; assuredly persuaded Christ had died for them, and waited to receive them into paradise.

The black had spied me coming out of the coach, and saluted me with his looks. As often as his eyes met mine, he smiled with the most composed, delightful countenance I ever saw. Read caught hold of my hand in a transport of joy. Newington seemed perfectly pleased. Hudson declared he was never better, or more at ease, in mind and body. None showed any natural terror of death: no fear, or crying or tears. I never saw such calm triumph, such incredible indifference to dying. We sang several hymns. . . . We prayed Him in earnest faith to receive their spirits. I could do nothing but rejoice: took leave of each in particular. Mr. Broughton bade them not be surprised when the cart should draw away. They cheerfully replied, they should not. . . . We left them going to meet their Lord, ready for the Bridegroom. When the cart drew off, not one stirred or struggled for life, but meekly gave up their spirits. Exactly at twelve they were turned off. I spoke a few suitable words to the crowd; and returned, full of peace and confidence in our friends' happiness. That hour under the gallows was the most blessed hour of my life.

The Power of God's Love

Here in the very extremity of man's need we see Wesley's faith in the power of God through Christ to save his lost creatures. Here is human sinfulness, to be sure; but greater than this is the power of God's love. Look at the last part of stanza 3 and at stanza 4 of Wesley's hymn. See if this experience is not reflected there:

Just and holy is Thy Name,
I am all unrighteousness;
False and full of sin I am,
Thou art full of truth and grace.

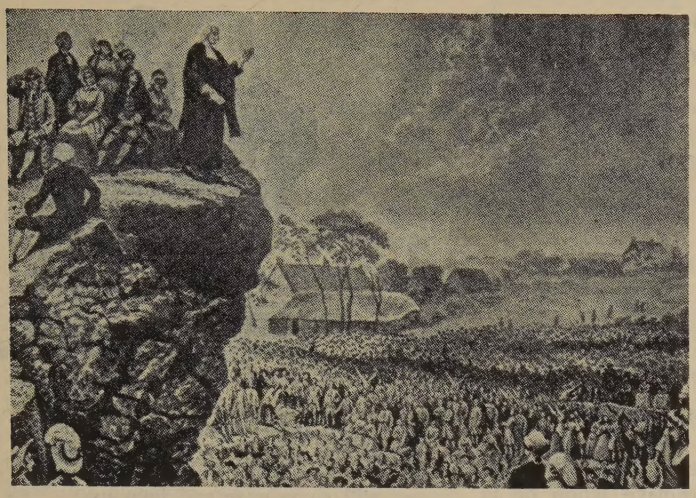
Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
Grace to cover all my sin;
Let the healing streams abound;
Make and keep me pure within.
Thou of life the Fountain art,
Freely let me take of Thee:
Spring Thou up within my heart,
Rise to all eternity.

The more one studies these experiences of Wesley, the more amazing they seem. They speak volumes for his faith in the power of God, despite the depths into which human beings fall. And, incidentally, the third of these experiences says much about Wesley's faith in the power of prayer and in the sacrament of Holy Communion as a "converting ordinance." It may be that many Methodist ministers of the present day will never be called on to demonstrate their faith in such desperate conditions. But this is our faith, nonetheless, if we are true to our heritage from the Wesleys.

And what better faith could we have as a foundation for evangelism? Were we to overemphasize the hopelessness of man's depravity, evangelism would be useless. It could not succeed. Were we to overemphasize man's innate goodness, evangelism would be senseless. It would not seem necessary. But, on a foundation of truly Methodist theology, both realistic and confident, evangelism becomes our primary task.

As Christ Commanded

That is as Christ commanded. Our heritage from the Wesleys reveals a trinity of Methodist evangelism. First, it begins with a full recognition of human sin and the need of God's grace. With St. Paul, we know that "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." Second, it gains power from firm faith in the power and love of God and in the effectiveness of what God has done through Jesus Christ to save man from his sin. With St. Paul, we say, "God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." And third, it triumphs through the work of the Holy Spirit entering into human hearts opened and prepared for his coming. With St. Paul, we cry, "Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"



Wesley preaches in the amphitheatre at Gwennap, Cornwall

The Evangelistic Passion of John Wesley

by Gordon Pratt Baker

SCHOLAR, author, preacher, brilliant conversationalist, John Wesley was first and foremost an evangelist. All his varied talents were dominated by what Richard Watson Gilder once described as "the hunger and the passion for men's souls"—so much so, in fact, that on one occasion the venerable Samuel Johnson complained of him, "The dog enchants you with his conversation, and then breaks away to visit some old woman." A divine compulsion required him to do so. He was convinced that he had been called "to brother all the souls on earth," and to fulfill that calling he would stop at nothing.

Primary Concern

People were Wesley's primary concern. Although he once declared, "I do, indeed, live by preaching," he nevertheless devoted indefatigable energy to the demands of personal evangelism. He always had time for individuals. When it came to presenting the claims of Christ upon the souls of men, Wesley stated quite simply, "I have no time to be in a hurry."

Indeed, no small portion of his evangelistic genius was this ability to distinguish between the significant and the insignificant in human affairs. Thus, he sought out the rowdy smugglers in Cornwall, the outcastes of London and Liverpool, the raucous colliers of Kingswood, and the condemned prisoners of Newgate and Tyburn to offer them, quietly and sincerely, "the last, best hope of earth." He visited in the crowded, dirty hovels of the London slums until he knew more about the living conditions of the underprivileged than any other man of his time. In his seventy-fourth year, following systematic visiting in Bethnal Green hamlet, he wrote:

> O why do not all the rich, that fear God, constantly visit the poor! Can they spend part of their spare time better? Certainly not.

Pastoral visiting loomed large in Wesley's whole ministry. He could not content himself with the impersonal presentation of a personal gospel; and, while he found it hard to do, he engaged faithfully in visitation because he saw that it was vital to the life of his Societies. He gave voice to this conviction on several occasions in his *Journal*.

On December 29, 1758, for example, he recorded that

> By repeated experiments we learn that though a man preach like an angel, he will neither collect nor preserve a Society which is collected, without visiting them from house to house.

Similarly, on June 5, 1772, he lamented the decreased membership of the Society at Newgate and attributed the loss to "the want of visiting from house to house; without which the people will hardly increase either in number or grace."

So seriously did Wesley regard this phase of his ministry that, when he was past 70 years of age, he "began at the east end of the town [London] to visit the Society from house to house." He did the same at Kingswood and at Bristol.

Purposed Visitation

Always his visiting had a purpose. His was no "pink tea" social call. Rather, he visited to examine the spiritual life of the Society's members and to strengthen those who had come under conviction in his meetings.

But, as we have seen, Wesley did not limit his evangelistic concern to the members of his Societies. England's hour of salvation came when the father of Methodism went to the gaping mouths of the mines and stood in the hostile marketplaces to tell a gin-crazed, immoral, illiterate people of the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

In telling them that, however, Wesley made one fact unmistakably clear. God does not simply save men *from* something. He saves them *to* something.

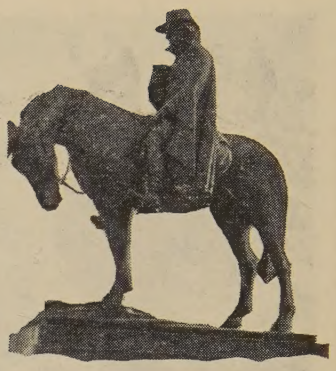
If the hope of earth rests in human redemption, then no less does the hope of heaven. Men must come under the conviction of their sins, not because they are vile, but because those sins block them from attaining unto the stature of saints.

Above all else, they must see and forever remember that God speaks with their voices, that He uses their heads and hands and hearts to fashion the objects of His holy will. So let them lay hold of the perfect love of God and, inflamed by His purpose, let them seek their neighbor's welfare. For it is not what is outside that controls the direction of life, but the responsiveness of the soul to a high and just cause.

Practical Interpretation

Thus, Wesley made men aware of those qualities which persuaded God to pronounce His creation good. The force which the outraged poor of France later released in the terrors of fratricidal rebellion John Wesley turned into the channels of evangelism. And he did it by a clearly reasoned, calmly delivered, magnificently practical interpretation of Jesus' faith in the common people.

Francis Asbury the Evangelist



As Seen from His Letters

by J. Manning Potts

Francis Asbury was primarily an evangelist.

He became the dynamic administrator of a far-flung ecclesiastical empire. But that was largely a result of 45 years of evangelistic preaching and traveling.

He was the "Prophet of the Long Road." But he became that because he had dedicated himself to an evangelistic enterprise.

The letters of Francis Asbury—which have recently been collected, collated, and annotated—give evidence of the evangelistic passion of this prophet. If one reads more than 300 letters which have come to light, he will observe for himself the evangelistic passion which motivated the man.

Over 2,600 letters of John Wesley have been collected and published in the eight volumes compiled by Telford. There were evidently many more. Francis Asbury probably wrote as many as, or even more than, John Wesley. At one time he said that he thought he wrote a thousand letters a year. Perhaps he did. A minute study of his *Journal* shows that he was constantly writing. He had built that ecclesiastical empire, and he had to keep in touch with it.

Scarcity of News

The news of the day was scarce. Almost no papers and magazines existed. Asbury had to keep going the Church which he had been largely instrumental in establishing. He had to write, write, write to preachers and people. And he did that.

There are enough letters now extant to prove that he considered his writing to be necessary for posterity. He collected and attempted to have a history written. He failed in this, but his consciousness of the importance of this task drove him to keep the letters going and the replies coming. If one could ask him, Asbury would certainly tell the questioner that he had failed in recording a history. He could not get the preachers to write. However, what he did was of inestimable value to posterity. Asbury comes more alive with his letters. He was human; and, like another great American, Abraham Lincoln, he is more attractive when he is shown to be a human being.

He had a passion for souls. The Christmas Conference of 1784 said,

> It is not your business to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that society, but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord.

This admonition constituted the driving passion of Asbury all the days of his life. In the first extant letter to his father and mother, he says,

> Watch and pray, and pray for me and all will be well, dear father. I hope you love and cleave to Jesus. Have you victory over sin and that which has in time past most easily beset you? O dear father, labor to increase as with more of God, to be holy and without blame before him in love.

In that same letter Asbury sends a message,

> Sister Smith you have many trials one upon the back of another, but you can't trust. Set up your Ebenezer and say, hitherto the Lord hath helped you, and he will if you look to him in every trial, and help you to keep your garments always white. O child contend for this. Don't give it up, sooner give up your life than this. I do and always will affirm that the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin, and if no one will stand with me I will stand alone.

At this time he was only twenty-three years old, but this is the norm by which he fashioned his life.

A Basic Concern

There are two letters with the same concern written in 1816 within a month of his death. To Joseph Benson, a prominent English preacher, classical master of Kingswood School, he wrote,

> Upon this continent we are crowded with French people. . . . We want French Methodist preachers. Despairing of obtaining any from the travelling connecton, since we have read your reports, our only hope is that some of our brethren from Jersey and Guernsey will come over and help us.

There is more indicating the burden which Asbury felt for these people.

It was true that he carried a like burden for the German people. It has been said that he did not show enough interest in them. The letters give a different picture. The last letter written by Asbury, written on his last journey and less than a month before his death, shows his concern for German missions.

> If we take up German missions, it must be spiritedly. I wish we had four men who would offer freely, and serve faithfully, married or single: our hymn book translated, a thousand copies of *Discipline* (the hymn book and *Discipline* were translated, a few copies are extant) correct from General Conference. If they will not sell, give them away to the people. Send a missionary to Schuylkill District, Susquehanna, Carlisle and Monongahela, presiding elders holding cash to pay the missionaries quarterly, the missionaries making collections and being accountable for these also to the conferences. I wish the change of Henry Boehm and Roberts (later Bishop) because of Henry's usefullness in German.

There are a half dozen letters which show equal concern for the German people.

No Respecter of Class

Recently when this writer contacted one of the archivists of a great state library and asked for help in locating people to whom Asbury referred, the archivist replied that the search was most difficult as Asbury visited the homes of the people who were in very moderate circumstances and, therefore, unknown.

It is perfectly true that he visited in the homes of that kind of people. However, Asbury knew no class. He had a tremendous personal interest in all classes.

There are still extant in many counties the census of 1790, with tax listings even before that date. These

are listings of heads of families showing the head of the family with the number of persons in the household, the number of dwellings, and other buildings. In other words, the leading citizens of the communities are listed. Where these exist they have been the chief sources of information as to the friends of Asbury. He knew the people where he traveled and visited them. Governors, generals, county magistrates, ferry keepers, innkeepers, merchants, and others were well known to Asbury; and he was well known to them. On the other hand, he knew the people who lived in the one-room cabins on the frontiers. For 13 people to sleep on the same floor in a one-room cabin with bawling children was not unusual. He loved the children and was almost never irritated by them. He considered them to be his evangelistic opportunity and early began Sunday schools for them.

Concern for Children

One of the questions asked at the Christmas Conference was "But what shall we do for the rising generation?" The answers are interesting:

1. Where there are 10 children whose parents are in society, meet them at least once every week.
2. Talk with them every time you see any of them at home.
3. Pray in earnest for them.
4. Diligently instruct and vehemently exhort all parents at their own houses.
5. Preach expressly on education.

This was Asbury's own prescription, and he followed it throughout his life.

One of the prominent families well known to Asbury was the Van Cortlandt family of New York. Mr. Van Cortlandt was for 18 years the lieutenant-governor of New York and called Governor. His home was the preachers' home. The family there were upon Asbury's heart. In 1797 he wrote a letter to Philip, one of the Governor's sons.

> My dear friend I feel a great tenderness for you and your whole family for your distinguished kindness to our people when they were few in members. You are blessed with a goodly mother as I am also. You have a gracious sister whose soul with mine longeth for the salvation of your soul and the soul of your brother. But how hardly shall they that not only have much of this world, but are in connection with the policy and interests of this world (be saved)? My dear friend you hear, you feel the gospel, do you pray and strive? Early guidance being called, and (you) are a child of a mother's prayers and tears. Jesus hath bled for you. From a child God hath been at work on your heart. Probably in war and trouble saved, and perhaps you promised God if He would spare you, you would seek Him. When the Methodists came along at the first you had perhaps awful and palpable conviction, you could not hide it. You cannot keep away from Methodist preaching, you would feel a great disappointment and from rest to come to hear, you cannot be happy in a worldly enjoyment, you love some of the ministry as your own soul, yea perhaps more than your own soul if yet you do not love God. I should be happy to see you and to see you love Jesus.

Again he shows his concern for the family when in June, 1804, he writes to another son, Major Pierre Van Cortlandt.

> We live in a time of peace, and in general plenty, surely this is the time to gain religion, heaven and happiness. Oh ring free and remember your convictions, your promises, your anguish, your fear, when in danger of death. Now say it to heart, he is a man of prayer and you will be a man of grace, a man of God. What will not the Lord do for you, what may he not do with you, if you neglect so great a salvation?

Personal Evangelism

Asbury put great stress upon personal evangelism in the homes. He made disciples who had the same burden for souls, who—to use a modern expression—followed the same techniques. Let us look at two of these.

Daniel Asbury became a most useful

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preacher. He was no kin to Francis Asbury, but he was dear to the Bishop because he was of the same name. Daniel writes from Camden, South Carolina:

> Brother Hill is indefatigable in visiting from house to house, talking to, and praying with and for the people, and the Lord blesses his labour of love. I am more than ever convinced that if we were more faithful in this duty of visiting, both in towns and circuits, we should be more happy in our own souls, and much more successful in the work of our high calling. May the holy flame spread wide and sink deep till all the earth be filled with the knowledge of God.

The other is a letter from the Reverend William Hodge of Sumner County, Tennessee, to Francis Asbury. He is reporting on the camp meeting.

> About the rising of the sun on Monday morning, there was a most glorious resurrection among the spiritual dead: every minute almost, for a considerable time, praises were heard for the conversion of a soul, until they became almost incessant. O the joy and gladness that ran thro' the great congregation! Now neighbors and friends, brothers and sisters, parents and children, were in each other's arms: yea, even enemies were reconciled, and met in bands of mutual peace with God and each other, in the Lord Jesus. The number professing to have found peace on this occasion, cannot be precisely ascertained, but is generally supposed to exceed an hundred. For a considerable time after, we could hear of many falling in their corn fields, cotton-patches, yards, houses, and on the roads, under deep convictions, and many of them in a few hours obtaining deliverance.

Asbury was an indefatigable evangelist. The Methodist Church began in America as an evangelistic movement within the Church of England. It soon became separated, and in a little while The Methodist Church became a powerful instrument in reforming the continent and spreading scriptural holiness over the land.

Asbury, the evangelist and administrator, was largely responsible for making it so.

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1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee

Methodism's Mighty Destiny--

A World Parish

by Ernest E. Tuck
Advance Director
Division of World Missions, Board of Missions

Going to church in Sarawak, Borneo.

Bishop Gerald Kennedy, following an official visit to some of the churches in the Far East, recently wrote, "If we can see the Church in action around the world, we will rejoice in a mighty destiny. I can never cease thrilling at the glorious memories of Methodist missions."

John Wesley's dream of Methodism's "mighty destiny" was nothing short of a world parish. That vision has sent his followers into all the world to carry the good tidings of Christ's redemptive love and transforming power. Today, in all branches of Methodism, more than 16,000,000 members are enrolled in a great international Christian fellowship in half a hundred countries, speaking scores of different dialects and languages, but all belonging in the family of God. When they pray the prayer of our Lord, they, too, say, "Our Father . . . ," even though it is said in a language other than English.

Great Christian Fellowship

The Methodist Church, with 9,500,000 members, is organized in more than 40 countries. At the General Conference meeting in Minneapolis this month, scores of delegates representing churches in many countries of Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Latin American countries will sit with delegates from Annual Conferences in the United States. Among these lay and ministerial delegates from overseas there will be college presidents, District Superintendents, lawyers, pastors, teachers, doctors, farmers, housewives, and a few students. Many of them will be dressed in the garb of their homeland, and their speech will be marked with a particular accent influenced by their mother tongue. But, regardless of the land from which they come, and regardless also of the color of their skin and their national or political affiliations, when they kneel at the altar to receive the elements of the Holy Communion, or when they stand to have their votes counted, they will do so, not as nationals of a particular country, but as part of a great Christian fellowship and as members of a Church that reaches around the world.

Rapidly Growing Church

There are now approximately 1,000,000 members of The Methodist Church outside the United States. These Methodists from other lands will have something to say. They will have insights and experience that many delegates from the United States have missed. They represent a rapidly growing Church—a Church that is more self-conscious, more self-reliant, more mature, and more aware of its responsibility than ever before in this day of revolution and change. They must now be heard in the highest Councils of our Church because many of them have a deep concern for their fellow men who have missed the way or who have not yet made a serious effort to find it.

Some revealing Christian experience may be shared by a man from Africa, or by a gentle, soft-spoken woman from India. Some penetrating observation into Christian truth may come out of South America, or the Philippines, or war-devastated Korea.

Severe Testing

This was not always so. During the past few decades, and especially since the close of the last world-shattering war, there has been a great upsurge of new life and spirit, new enthusiasm and evangelistic zeal, throughout the younger Churches. Some of them came through severe testing. The crucible of suffering revealed the strength and courage and eagerness to share real values.

In Korea, where for years suffering has been so much a part of life, and where the destructiveness of war is so pathetically evident, there has been a great increase in membership and in the number of congregations. In 1940 there were 45,000 members recorded. Today the Methodist constituency is double that figure. More than 500 pastors are now under appointment, and new congregations are constantly being organized. Bishop Richard C. Raines wrote a few months ago from Korea, "Korea is on the move. Nationalism is now burgeoning. There is almost a mass movement toward Christ and His Church—the fields are white. . . . The soul of Korea is being fought for."

In Japan, where the Christian Church has not had any "mass movements" or rapid growth in recent times, there is a very genuine and deep interest in Christianity by increasing

thousands. Many thoughtful Japanese are truly concerned about Japan's place in the changed world situation. They are concerned about the thousands of students who are being graduated from schools and colleges to find their place in a world where many of the old restraints and ties are gone forever. More than 90 per cent of the students in church-related schools come from non-Christian homes, and they constitute a signal opportunity for the Christian Church to lead them into the way of Christ. Fifty-eight per cent of the teachers in these Church-controlled schools are now Christians and they are daily faced with the demand for Christ-like living in their dealing with students.

Special Evangelistic Campaigns

In the last six or seven years there have been special evangelistic campaigns led by American and Japanese evangelists. Stanley Jones has conducted two extensive campaigns, resulting in thousands of new decisions to learn more about the Christian faith. The Rev. Mr. Lawrence L. Lacour has also led a group of selected American evangelists to Japan on several occasions. His work has resulted in the organization of new congregations and the awakening of Japanese Christians to a keener sense of responsibility and opportunity to present Christ and His Way to these seekers after truth.

Kagawa, despite physical handicaps, continues his amazing and varied Christian ministry. Visitation evangelism is being adapted and used by the Japanese Church. This not only brings new members into the Church, but it also builds up the faith and Christian conviction of those already in the Church.

Nation-Wide Plan

Five years ago a nation-wide evangelistic plan was started, and it is gaining momentum as ministers and laymen and women realize their responsibility. The Methodist Church does not exist as a separate denomination in Japan. It is a vital and integral part of the United Church of Christ in Japan (Kyodan) to which the great majority of Protestant Christians in this land belong. The Methodist Church sends missionaries to Japan, and they identify themselves with and receive appointment to particular tasks from the Kyodan. There are now more than 150 men and women missionaries from The Methodist Church serving in Japan.

In Okinawa and the Ryuku Islands, which are still closely related in language and cultural ties to Japan, there is also an indigenous united Protestant Church with which The Methodist Church and its missionaries are related. Fifteen new church buildings have been built since the end of the war. Stanley Jones visited these islands in February, 1955, and secured more than three thousand decisions for the Christian life. Ten young Okinawans are now in training in Japan for full-time Christian service in their native land.

Centennial in India

Turn now to India, where The Methodist Church has its largest membership outside the United States. This year Methodism in India is celebrating its centennial. One hundred years ago William Butler, a Methodist preacher from New England, arrived in Calcutta and proceeded by train, on foot, and by wagon pulled by coolies for several hundred miles up the fertile valley of the sacred Ganges River to the city of Bareilly, where Indian Methodism was born. Today, in that land of many religions, there are more than 520,000 members of The Methodist Church in four Episcopal Areas and nine Annual Conferences. More than 300 Indian ministers serve 1,000 preaching points. The church conducts 640 primary, middle, and high schools in the crowded villages and towns, while in the historic city of Lucknow two outstanding Christian colleges—one for men and one for women—enroll hundreds of eager students.

A dozen hospitals of various sizes and 25 dispensaries carry the ministry of healing to thousands in the name of the Great Physician. Three hundred twenty-five missionaries, men and women sent out by The Methodist Church, serve with 3,000 devoted Indian men and women colleagues as ministers, teachers, doctors, nurses, evangelists, administrators, and in other capacities in making the Church a tremendous force for good and a channel through which may flow the renewing and transforming power of Christ.

The Methodist Church in the Philippines, which is now a vigorous, self-reliant, self-directing, evangelistic Church, has an historic relationship to the Church in India. It was early in 1899 that Bishop James M. Thoburn, that stalwart evangelist of India, came to Manila and held a preaching mission in an old Spanish theater. These were the first public Protestant services in the newly acquired Islands. Today, in this young independent Republic of the Philippines, The Methodist Church under the wise, consecrated, and untiring leadership of Bishop José L. Valencia counts 120,000 members in three Annual Conferences and in one Provisional Annual Conference. More than 300 Filipino ministers are under appointment in the sixteen Districts.

A Real Fellowship

Scores of well-trained, consecrated deaconnesses are also appointed to minister in hundreds of congregations. In greater Manila a dozen active churches, led by capable Filipino pastors, carry the message of Christ into hundreds of homes. Two great churches in the heart of the city are filled to overflowing in Sunday preaching services, with almost 1,000 worshipers in each of their main services. Church schools and youth organizations enroll thousands of children and young people for Christian teaching and service. The women of the Church, organized and led by Filipino women, carry on a varied and effective ministry of stewardship, evangelism, and Christian home and family life in far away *barrios* (villages) as well as in towns and cities. This helps to make the Church a real fellowship of believing and devoted Christians in a land that had nearly 400 years of domination by the old Roman Catholic Church.

Evangelism, the effective telling of the Good News of Christ, is one of the characteristics of the growing Church. The Philippine Church increased its membership during the last quadrennium by more than 25 per cent and will probably equal that record by the close of the present quadrennium.

The Church in China, despite many limitations, frustrations, and hardships, is still vigorous even though its ministry is curtailed. A hundred years of Christian experience and activity cannot be suddenly blotted out of the lives of thousands of devoted men and women by a change in government. In recent years The Methodist Church has entered Formosa to be of practical help to the 2,000 Methodists who have managed to get from the mainland to Formosa and have organized several new congregations.

Meets Needs

In Hongkong, also, The Methodist Church is helping to meet the needs of thousands of destitute and harassed Chinese who have fled the mainland to escape persecutions. A Methodist village called "Wesley Village" has been created to help them. In other lands of Asia, like Pakistan, Burma, Sumatra, Malaya, and Borneo, Methodists have gone with a message of hope and redemption and have estab-

(*Continued on page 12*)

The faculty and staff of Nagoya Gakuin a mission school in Japan.

Brazilian pastors participate in visitation evangelism at Porto Alegre, Brazil.

Graduates of Leonard Theological College, Gabalpur, India, serve the Church throughout India.

A work camper teaches a Sunday school class at Mindanao Rural Center, Philippines.

Below, part of a congregation attending church services in Umtali, Africa.

lished the Church which is seeking to become an instrument of God's will and purpose in the midst of fear, distrust, suspicion, and hate. It seeks to make men understand human values in God's sight and to build a bridge of love and understanding in a world town apart by many evil forces.

Urgent Opportunity

But it is in the tropical country of Sarawak on the island of Borneo that one of the most urgent present-day opportunities for the Church to proclaim Christ's message presents itself. For more than half a century our Church has been ministering to the thousands of Chinese who have migrated to this fertile land. But not many of the native Dyak peoples have yet been reached with the gospel. Now, however, 100,000 of these virile, simple, interesting Dyak people, who live back in the hills and along the river banks where no roads have yet been built, and where few "out-siders" have ever penetrated, are asking for help. They have opened the door wide to the brotherly, helpful service of the missionary. They want what the gospel seems to offer them. They need education for their children and healing of the many diseases of the body. They have seen in other lives something of the transformation Christ can make, and so they have opened the doors of their "long houses" and want to learn more. This is one of the great evangelistic opportunities of our day.

In the countries of Latin America, our neighbors to the south, stretching all the way from Mexico to Argentina, the Church is faced with a great variety of needs and opportunities. Political upheavals, struggle for power, economic distress, and a host of other problems have tested human ingenuity, courage, and faith. The Church is in the midst of these mighty movements because the Church is made up of people—persons like you and me.

Space will not permit a study of all these fascinating countries, but let us look briefly at Brazil, the largest of them all. During the past 25 years the membership of the autonomous Brazil Methodist Church has trebled. New church buildings are now being built at the rate of one every 21 days, and 80 per cent of the funds for these buildings are raised in Brazil.

The whole life of the Church has responded to the challenge of these times. Church members have caught a new vision of responsibility and are learning how they may win others to Christ.

At the recent Central Conference of this Church, two new Annual Conferences were organized, increasing the number from three to five. A new emphasis has been given to evangelism, Christian doctrine, and the calling of young people into Christian service.

There are nine other countries in Latin America where our Church is at work; and in each of them, through the preaching of the Word, through schools and hospitals, through social and agricultural work, the more abundant life which Christ came to give is manifested. From the high mountains of Bolivia to the long shore line of Chile, and from the vast plains of Argentina to Peru, from Panama and Costa Rica to Mexico, from Cuba to Uruguay, sometimes in isolated regions, the sick are being healed, minds are being opened, blind eyes are seeing the light, and the poor are having Good News preached to them—the Good News of Christ.

Vast Changes

We must now take a quick look at Africa, that vast "continent of fermenting, political, economic, and religious adventure. Africa is a land of expectation and excitement; there is always something new, and then always something so ancient that a visitor may assume that nothing changes. He would be right, and he would be very wrong."

Vast political and economic changes are taking place. Nationalism has gripped the entire continent and is manifesting itself in many forms, some violent and some in cooperation with existing governments that are trying to meet the demands of the people and thus save what may be possible of friendship and understanding. The whole situation has possibilities of generating overwhelming explosive pressures that could produce complete chaos.

Christianity is a significant factor in changing Africa. It is now estimated that between one-tenth and one-fifth of the population is in some way related to the Christian Church. This change in religious affiliation is bringing about changes in the social structure.

When large numbers of men are led out of a world of fear, as represented by the animistic religions, into knowledge of a God of love as seen in Jesus Christ, something tremendous has happened. They become new creatures in Christ, children of a common Father, together with other men of different tribes and peoples. Human values change. Life has new meaning and new purpose. A whole new world has opened up.

Africa now presents a wide-open opportunity for the more rapid bringing in of the gospel. This is her day of decision.

But the spread of Christianity is being challenged by Islam. Hundreds of Moslem missionaries are in preparation to move into Africa and thus stop the movement toward Christianity. The struggle in Africa for men's minds and allegiance is not yet as keen between Communism and Christianity as it is between Islam and Christianity. The step from animism into Islam is not nearly so great as from animism into the Christian faith, and it may not bring about such revolutionary changes in the social structure.

A Wide-Open Opportunity

The African is essentially a religious person. However, as he becomes Christian, he may not adopt the interpretation and practices of Christianity common in our so-called Christian West. The spiritual has real meaning for him even though it often expresses itself in crude ways. It may yet be that if the African can have a fair opportunity of knowing Christ in his matchless, simple purity as the revelation of God the Father, without having to accept all the non-essential forms, practices, and ceremonies which are often substituted for true religion, he may get a bit closer to that early Christian faith which turned the old Roman world upside down. We must give him that opportunity now because the next decade will be decisive.

The young Church in Africa is undertaking a more active evangelistic program than ever before. In some sections gospel teams of African Christians visit nearby villages. "Prayer crusades" are followed by services of testimony where effective Christian witness to the power of Christ is given. Truly, Africa is stirring with new life, aspiration, and hope.

So the Church continues to grow around the world because it is a witnessing Church, a sharing Church. The world parish becomes a world fellowship. Political barriers and idealogies may interfere with the full functioning of that fellowship. Iron curtains, bamboo curtains, and curtains of prejudice and ignorance may temporarily stop the free flow of outward expression of Christian love and understanding; but true followers of Christ know that

In Christ there is no East or West,
In Him no South or North;
But one great fellowship of love
Throughout the whole wide earth.

THE EVANGELISTIC MESSAGE OF METHODISM

by Fred Cloud
Assistant Editor, Youth Publications
The Methodist Church

METHODISM has never been known as a Church that stressed conformity in theological beliefs, either among its clergy or among its laity. This was not because its founder or its subsequent leaders thought that theology was unimportant. Rather, it was because they say clearly what J. S. Whale points out in *Christian Doctrine:* A person may have a perfectly correct theology and yet not be a Christian. Life is more than thought, even though thought can guide and enrich life.

Strictly speaking, Methodism does not have a message of its own creation. Rather, it participates in the mainstream of Christian history and thought, drawing both upon the teachings of the early church and upon the insights of the sixteenth-century Reformers.

The distinctiveness of Methodism's message is a result of certain *emphases,* which will be discussed below, that have been made from John Wesley's day to our own. This is an asset, rather than a liability. It explains in part at least why Methodists have participated wholeheartedly in ecumenical activities across the years. We have no corner on the truth, yet we do see certain aspects of truth that others do not see; so we speak and listen, teach and learn. The only way to become better Methodists is to become better Christians!

God's Love for Man

First, Methodism affirms that *God has taken the initiative* in saving man from himself and in giving him salvation. This initiative is an expression of God's grace, His love (*agape*) for man, rather than a response to anything man has done—or can do. This is "news" because it was not just an abstract idea conceived by some theologians long ago; rather, it is a reporting of what has happened through Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ. It is "good news" —something to shout about—because God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself.

Whenever anyone really believes this terrific statement, he cannot but feel excited, thrilled, humbled. God's grace is not expressed in "general terms"; it is *for me!* Only when he came really to believe this did John Wesley have his life-changing experience of "the warm heart." As he wrote in his Journal for May 24, 1738:

> In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine,* and saved *me* from the law of sin and death.

This has been a distinctive emphasis in Methodism from that day to our

own: The personal witness of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer that God really does love, forgive, and redeem him. One can truly *know* that he is a child of God! And this knowledge generates joy.

For All Men

Second, Methodism affirms that *God's love, and Christ's work as an expression of that love, is not restricted to a chosen few, but is for all men.* This universal note repudiates the Calvinistic notion that Christ died for the elect only. Such a conception of God's love is too small to do justice to the Father of Jesus Christ! When one accepts the truth of God's universal concern, he finds that by an inescapable logic he must become a channel of that concern.

This is news too good to be kept! So Methodists have developed a far-reaching missionary program. Further, since *all men*—not just persons of a particular race, nationality, or economic class—are the recipients of God's love, Methodists always have been aware that they must work for social justice and for recognition of the dignity and worth of every individual. Thus we see that evangelism, missions, and social action are three of the Christian's natural responses to God's love—not a "program" imposed from outside the faith.

Christian Perfection

Third, Methodism affirms that *God wills that everyone should be made perfect in love in this life.* As a doctrine, Christian perfection has been much debated across the years. Yet it was not for purposes of debate, but as a goal for daily living, that John Wesley picked up and stressed Jesus' commandment: "You . . . must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matthew 5:48.)

By perfection, Wesley did *not* mean freedom from ignorance or mistakes. And he plainly stated that *"sinless perfection* is a phrase I never use." What, then, did Wesley mean? In his own words, perfection is "purity of intention, dedicating all the life to God. It is the giving God all our hearts; it is one desire and design ruling all our tempers. It is the devoting, not a part, but all, our soul, body, and substance to God. . . . It is a renewal of the heart in the whole image of God, the full likeness of him that created it." [1]

The word "perfection" cannot be used with regard to one's own spiritual life without Pharasaism, perhaps. However, the value of this doctrine—the highest of ideals for daily Christian living—can be expressed in our day by such words as "dedication" or "consecration." A completely consecrated Christian would fulfill Wesley's description. It is important that we conserve Wesley's insight: *The importance of moral earnestness, of growth in the depth of one's commitment to the will of God.* If we content ourselves with anything less than this, we are ignoring one of the plainest of Jesus' commandments!

The New Birth

Fourth, Methodism affirms that *to become a Christian, a person must experience the "new birth."* Again, in stating this doctrine, Wesley merely underlined one of Jesus' express teachings: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3.) In our day when youth and adults alike are visiting in the name of Christ and the Church, asking persons to commit their lives to Christ and to become members of His body, the Church, it is important that we not forget this cardinal teaching of the New Testament. For we know that the Church cannot produce this "birth of the Spirit"; only God can cause it. It would be tragic if persons were deluded into thinking that they had become Christians merely by "joining the Church"! Unless and until persons come alive to the world of spiritual reality, there will be no power in their lives—and a Church made up of such persons will have no power, either!

In "The Marks of the New Birth," Wesley describes what it is like to be a son or a child of God: it is, so to believe in God, through Christ, as "not to commit sin," and to enjoy at all times, and in all places, that "peace of God which passeth all understanding." It is, so to *hope* in God through the Son of his love, as to have not only the "testimony of a good conscience," but also the Spirit of God "bearing witness with your spirits, that ye are the children of God"; whence cannot but spring the rejoicing in him through whom ye "have received the atonement." It is, so to *love* God, who hath thus loved you, as you never did love any creature: so that ye are constrained to love all men as yourselves; with a love not only ever burning in your hearts, but flaming out in all your actions and conversations, and making your whole life one "labor of love." [2]

The "new birth" is truly the foundation of the Christian life. Methodism must, to be true to historic Christianity, continue to stress this action of God in the life of the believer. We need to protect our people, however, against some of the more dogmatic evangelists who contend that if a person does not know *when* he was saved, then he has not been saved. As Nolan B. Harmon aptly points out: "Being regenerate and born again is one thing; *knowing exactly when* one has been born again is something else. Many sincere Christians have not been able to tell when they became Christians. But they know they *are*." [3]

Justification by Faith

Finally, together with our fellow Protestants, Methodists affirm that *we are justified by faith.* This truth, set forth time and time again by Paul in his letters, was recovered by Martin Luther and was made the cornerstone of Protestant theology. It emphasizes that man's redemption from sin and death is God's work, resulting from God's compassionate concern for His creation, rather than something that man earns by his spiritual striving.

Personal faith and trust in God as made known through Jesus Christ is man's response to God's action that makes possible a right relation with Him. No religion of works—whether mental, physical, or spiritual "works"—can ever "make things right" (justify) in God's sight. Man seems always, in his pride, to want to save himself, rather than accept with gratitude God's redemptive action in Jesus Christ! Many of the "how to" books in the field of religion today seem to contribute to this problem.

Methodism's evangelistic message is, and always must be, the full gospel of Jesus Christ. That "good news" is not static: God's Word is a *living* Word. It speaks to living men, in changing circumstances. The emphases described in this article have arisen to meet the needs of persons in past ages, and they still seem pertinent today. However, we must be alert to emerging needs and opportunities. We honor God as we point out the relevance of His "good news" to everyman's life in every age. New emphases may be called for, to bring the gospel to bear upon all of life in our time. May we be worthy successors of Wesley in our witness to the Christian way!

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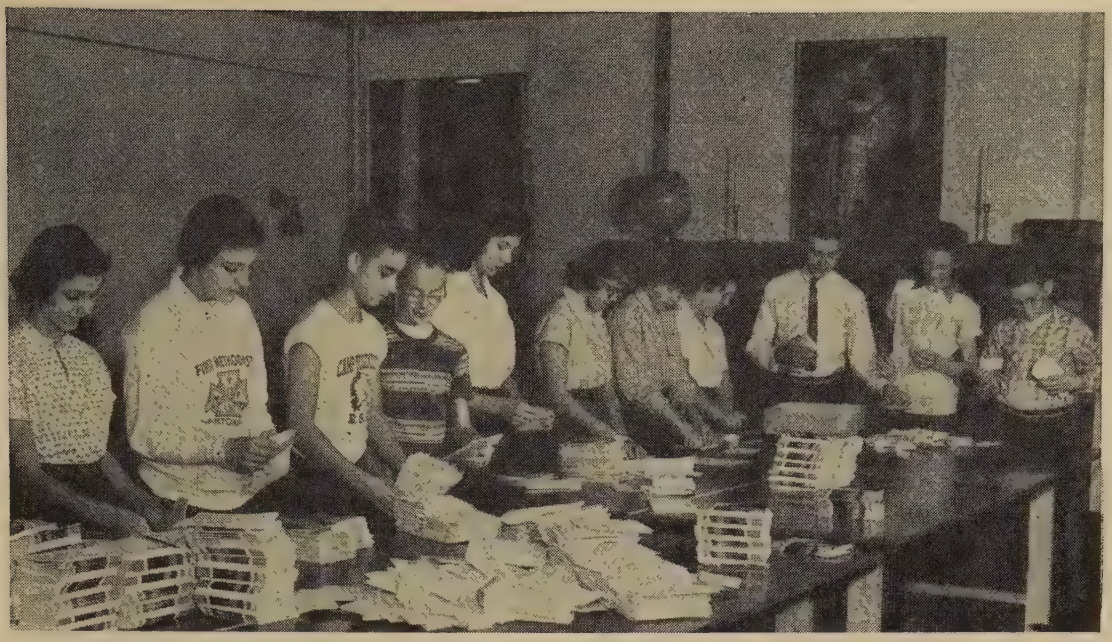
[1] Quoted in *A Compend of Wesley's Theology,* by Robert W. Burtner and Robert E. Chiles (Abingdon Press), p. 208.

[2] *Ibid.,* pp. 172-173.

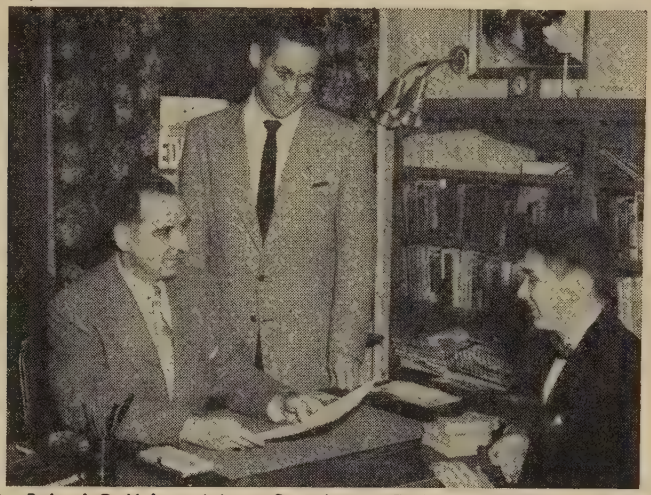
[3] *Understanding The Methodist Church,* p. 65.

Our Youth—God Bless Them



Members of the Methodist Youth Fellowship of The First Methodist Church of Canton, Ohio, preparing copies of *The Upper Room* to be mailed to every family of the church, prospective members and members away from home.

by
Roland G. Hohn
Minister of
First Methodist Church
Canton, Ohio



Dr. Roland G. Hohn, minister; Rev. August E. Aamodt, minister to youth (center); and Robert Hackley, MYF president, discussing plans for The Upper Room Parish Plan project, sponsored by the youth of First Church.

FOR some time it had been my desire, as a part of the deepening of the life of prayer in the congregation, to have every family receive THE UPPER ROOM. I asked several of our adult classes to undertake sending it, with an offering envelope enclosed, as a prayer and faith project. When the adults took a dim view toward it as a financial liability, I asked the MYF if they would not like to undertake it. Without any hesitation at all, the young people, God bless them, undertook it and will be shortly celebrating their first anniversary—and the records show they are financially in the black.

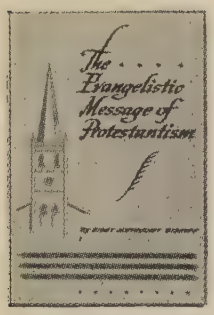
Youth Build Prayer Room

Our young people have formed prayer fellowship groups and have transformed an unused room off the balcony into a lovely chapel which they call their "Upper Room." This worshipful, quiet place has become a source of strength to many who have gone there for prayer and meditation. Those who are seeking to walk in closer fellowship with their Lord and Master have accepted with gratitude and humility this beautiful gift from the youth of our congregation.

Revitalized Church

The whole church has been revitalized and unified as the material to encourage a family altar is sent into each home every two months. It is not easy to pass up a request made by our sons and daughters.

Two members of the MYF kneel in a small chapel built, furnished and paid for by the youth of First Church, which they call their "Upper Room."



1948 Messages

"Christ Is the Life"

The Gene

HOUR OF

Wesley Methodist Church, Minn

THE HOUR OF EVANGELISM, a time set aside each day of the General Conference for evangelistic preaching by the leaders of the Church, will be a highly anticipated part of the 1956 General Conference at Minneapolis, Minnesota. The Theme for this series of services will be "Christ Is the Life."

Wesley Methodist Church, Dr. John B. Oman, pastor, will be the scene of the Hour of Evangelism each afternoon at 4:00 o'clock. The church is adjacent to the Minneapolis Auditorium where the other sessions of the General Conference will be held.

Speakers

Six Bishops of The Methodist Church, one from each of the Jurisdictions, will preach during the first week of the Conference. Bishop H. Bascom Watts of the Nebraska Area will speak at the first service, Tuesday afternoon, April 24. He will be followed, in order, by Bishops John Branscomb, A. Raymond Grant, Matthew W. Clair, Frederick Buckley Newell, and Edwin E. Voigt.

On Sunday night and during the second week, the Hour of Evangelism will present Dr. Alan Walker, outstanding evangelistic leader from Australia. Dr. Walker conducted Methodism's Mission to the Nation in Australia. This Mission has been one of the most significant evangelistic efforts ever conducted by any part of The Methodist Church.

Great singing by the congregation, always a feature of the Hour of Evangelism, is assured by the leadership of Mr. Glen Johnson, Director of Music of the First Methodist Church in Dallas, Texas. Mr. Johnson has been one of the finest leaders in bringing Methodism back to the place where it is again becoming a great singing Church.

The Hour of Evangelism at General Conference first appeared at the Uniting Conference in 1939. Held in a near-by Methodist church, the program at once found a place in the overall Conference program. The service is planned to be helpful in supplementing the spiritual life of General Conference. It appeals not only to the delegates, but also to the many others who attend the Conference. Local people have an opportunity to hear some of the finest evangelistic leaders of the Church as they make their witness through preaching.

Theme

Theme for the 1956 Hour of Evangelism, "Christ Is the Life," will enable the speakers to strike directly into the heart of the need of the Christian gospel for this day.

Various ministers were chosen at the first two General Conferences for the Hour of Evangelism. In 1944, the newer Bishops elected at the preceding Jurisdictional Conferences were asked to speak. This practice, continued through 1948 and 1952, is combined in 1956 with the addition, during the second week of the program, of the Rev.

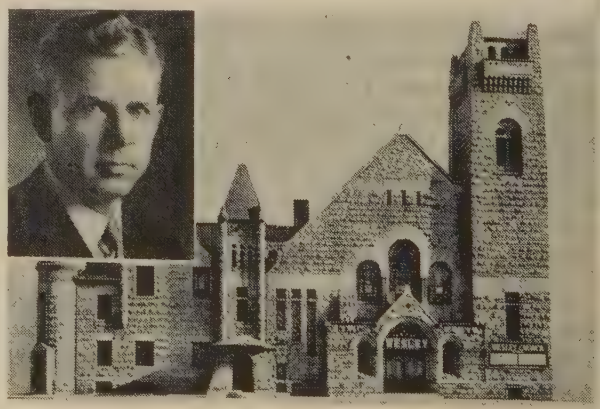
Bishop Watts

Bishop Branscomb

Bishop Grant

Left, Rev. Alan Walker, O.B.E., Director of the Mission to the Nation for The Methodist Church in Australia.

Right, historic Wesley Methodist Church, Marquette and Grant Streets next to Municipal Auditorium, Minneapolis. Inset: Dr. John B. Oman, pastor of Wesley Church.



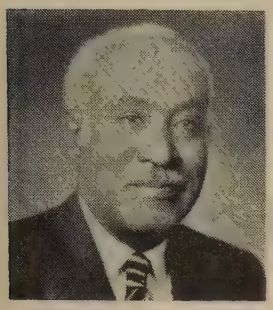
Conference

ANGELISM

Minnesota, April 23-May 5, 1956

"Christ Is the Life"

1952 Messages



Bishop Clair

Bishop Newell

Bishop Voigt

Dr. Alan Walker. The 1948 and 1952 messages were later printed by TIDINGS under the titles of *The Evangelistic Message of Protestantism* and *Evangelism for Our Age.*

The General Board of Evangelism has been given the responsibility of planning and promoting this part of the General Conference program. Harry L. Williams and the staff of the Department of Evangelistic Missions and Methods, will again be in charge at Minneapolis.

In keeping with the wholehearted interest of The Methodist Church in the Prayer Life Movement, opportunities will be provided to those interested for continuing prayer experiences. Dr. John B. Oman, pastor of Wesley Church, is making the church's beautiful chapel available for continuous periods of prayer.

Special Music

Special background music will be provided by The Upper Room through transcribed organ music prepared for use in The Upper Room Chapel by Dr. Van Denman Thompson, Dean of the School of Music at DePauw University. Dr. Thompson recorded the music on the great organ of the Gobin Memorial Methodist Church in Greencastle, Indiana.

Actual prayer opportunities will be developed in a number of ways according to the particular needs of the General Conference and the program as it develops day by day.

The General Conference

HOUR OF EVANGELISM

Wesley Methodist Church
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Daily at 4:00 P.M., Sunday night, 8 P.M.

Tuesday, April 24—
BISHOP H. BASCOM WATTS

Wednesday, April 25—
BISHOP JOHN BRANSCOMB

Thursday, April 26—
BISHOP A. RAYMOND GRANT

Friday, April 27—
BISHOP MATTHEW W. CLAIR

Saturday, April 28—
BISHOP FREDERICK B. NEWELL

Sunday night, April 29, 8:00 P.M., in Minneapolis Auditorium
THE REV. ALAN WALKER

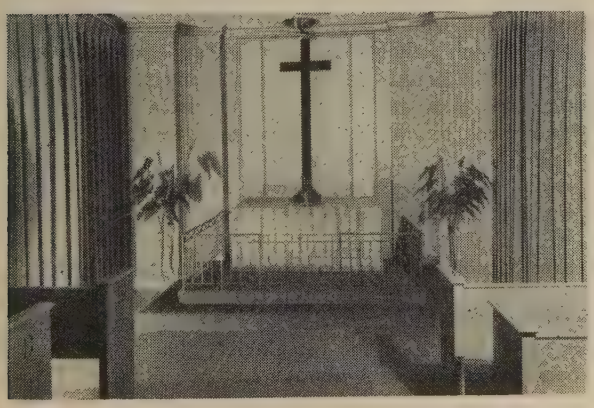
Monday, April 30—
BISHOP EDWIN E. VOIGT

Tuesday, May 1 through Saturday, May 5—
THE REV. MR. ALAN WALKER
Australia

Song leader for All Services—
MR. GLEN JOHNSON
First Methodist Church
Dallas, Texas

All are welcome and urged to attend the

HOUR OF EVANGELISM



Left, the Prayer Chapel in Wesley Methodist Church, where continuous prayer will be made throughout General Conference for the Conference and the work of The Methodist Church.

Right, Mr. Glen Johnson, Director of Music, First Methodist Church, Dallas, Texas, and song leader for the Hour of Evangelism.

Which Way? What Next in Evangelism?

DECEMBER SHEPHERDS presented an article entitled "Which Way? What Next in Evangelism?" This article briefly reviewed some of the main currents of the evangelistic emphases and programs during the past decade or so, lifted up some of the apparent opportunities of the present and future, and requested the readers to write and express their views and make suggestions for a constructive, ongoing evangelism in the future.

The present article is an attempt to give a summary of the replies which have been received to date. More articles may still come in, judging by the fact that a few replies have been received even recently, though it is now three months since the article appeared in SHEPHERDS.

An Evangelistic Church

For the most part, the replies that have been received have been interesting and helpful. They have been written by persons who love the Lord and earnestly desire to see The Methodist Church become an evangelistic Church and be truly recognized as "Christianity in earnest," as early Methodism was oftentimes referred to. Two or three of the replies will be printed more or less in full in forthcoming issues of SHEPHERDS, since they are of the type that would make interesting evangelistic articles.

Most of the suggestions were of a general, spiritual nature and were without any reference to specific legislation on the part of the General Conference or an Annual Conference. Nevertheless, there were suggestions along this line, as follows:

1. Restore to the "Historical Statement" in the *Discipline* the emphasis that the purpose of Methodism is to "raise a holy people." This statement is approximated here and there in the "Historical Statement" in the 1952 *Discipline* but without the definiteness that it had in the 1944 and 1948 *Discipline,* where it read as follows:

> The doctrine and spirit of primitive Christianity have existed at different times and in different degrees in all branches of the Kingdom of Christ. They were embodied in a new form on this wise:
>
> "In 1729 two young men in England, reading the Bible, saw that they could not be saved without holiness, followed after it, and incited others so to do. In 1737 they saw likewise, that men are justified before they are sanctified; but still holiness was their object. God then thrust them out to raise a holy people."
>
> This was the rise of Methodism, as described in the words of its founders, John and Charles Wesley, of Oxford University, presbyters of the Church of England.

2. Effect legislation calling for each Annual Conference to have a full-time Secretary of Evangelism.

3. Have an "extension" type of pastorate for rural work, somewhat as county agents extend the work of farming and agriculture in rural sections. In doing this, have a "county pastor" who will work largely outside church walls and present parish areas. Equip him with a station wagon, audio-visual aids, films, etc. Encourage the unchurched people to call on him for pastoral service and have him encourage the people to relate themselves to and identify themselves with the churches. To help in this, he could build up an afternoon Sunday school and could build up country "sings" and turn them and the people in the direction of Christ and the Church.

4. Bring about a closer cooperation or coordination in the local church between the Commissions on Membership and Evangelism, Education, and Missions.

5. In the Church-wide program of evangelism put large emphasis on winning the cities. The cities are where the masses of the people are, and from the cities emanate the influences (political, educational, social, religious) that by and large affect the whole population.

6. Let the church schools become better equipped and trained to give the people good foundations in Christian education, in Christian principles, and Christian living. To this end, the church school literature can cause the children and young people to be familiar with the demands of Christ for all who are to follow Him, as well as the needs of the Church. We are followers of Christ first and Methodists second.

7. Put first emphasis on "the evangelism of the Church," of The Methodist Church. When the Church gets on fire with a personal Christian experience, everyone with whom we associate will be set on fire for Christ, also.

"How can this be brought about? Let our General Con-

ference devise the means. We only suggest the place to start," one writer says. "Let every Conference, District, and sub-District group of ministers and pastors be called together in a great spiritual retreat. And let the best evangelist in the group preach the gospel of salvation for lost sinners and invite every minister to the altar for repentance, confession, and full surrender to the whole will of Christ for himself."

Need for Spiritual Re-birth and Awakening

And, having said this, we have approached that which was, by and large, the burden of a majority of the replies.

1. In answer to the question, "Which way in Evangelism," the replies were numerous: Forward—Inward—Back to God—Back to the Bible—Repentance—Rebirth of the Church—Rebirth of people—Christian Perfection—Holiness—etc.

2. Keep up the good work of what has been happening—only extend and intensify it, purify it, and set it afire for God. Let SHEPHERDS and *The Christian Advocate* present articles that can evoke an individual's hunger for close, personal fellowship with God achieved through presenting our bodies a living sacrifice unto Him.

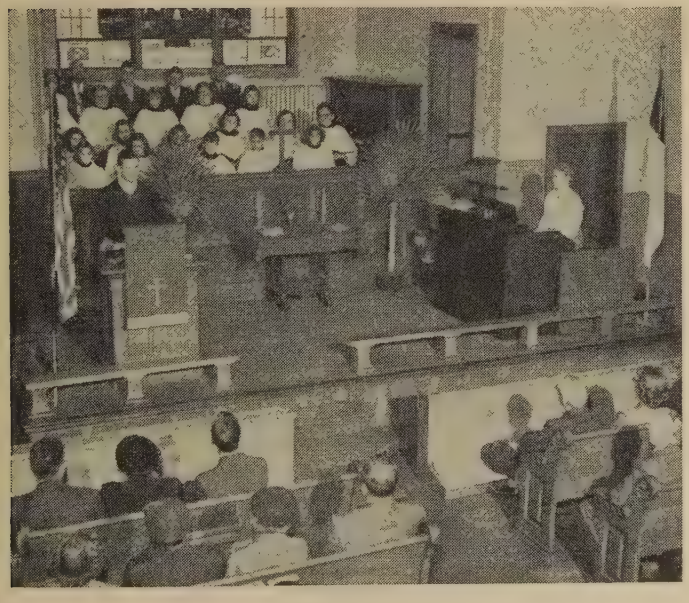
3. Let every church have a Fishermen's Club, a Look-Out Committee for prospects, an Evangelistic Literature Committee, and an Assimilation Committee working the year-around. Let every District (or sub-District) have workshops on evangelism.

4. Make more use of prayer. Re-establish the midweek prayer meeting. Inaugurate a cottage prayer meeting system.

5. Read the Bible. Get people to read the Bible. Have Bible studies in every church. Get people to know the Bible. Get people to love the Bible. Get people to live the Bible.

6. Have Spirit-filled preachers. Let the seminaries emphasize the developing and turning out of preachers who are holy, who love God, and are Spirit-filled, and who thus will be able to lead their people into Spirit-filled lives. Let all the preachers hate sin, preach the truth, and present holy living in themselves and in their preaching. Let them love God and people more than self.

Let the doctrinal sermon be restored to the Methodist pulpit.



7. Have more evangelistic meetings. Let every church have at least two series of evangelistic preaching services every year. Let the emphasis be upon salvation, salvation *from* sin and not salvation *in* sin. Let the doctrinal sermon be restored to the Methodist pulpit.

8. Have more full-time evangelists. Have more evangelistic preachers, or more evangelistic preaching by the pastors. Let pastors preach like Jesus, John the Baptist, Paul, Peter, Stephen, and not like Socrates or Aristotle. Let them preach for holiness and against sin, and not vaguely in between—not simply on ethical ideals or vague generalities. Let the Conference Evangelist be exalted and his work emphasized.

9. Let the Methodists pay more attention to their *Discipline* and be guided both by the "pure religion and undefiled" in the *Discipline* and by the rules and regulations designed to make Methodist churches better churches and Methodist people better people. "Keep our rules and not mend them."

10. Let Methodist churches learn to make better use of newspapers and other means of publicity. Let them keep themselves and their vital purposes, plans, and programs ever in the consciousness of the people.

11. Let the churches exert more wholesome influences upon the public schools, so that they will become our greatest allies in the matters of morals and religion.

12. Make certain that only consecrated and active persons are members of the local church Commission on Membership and Evangelism.

13. We do not need a program of any kind, as far as the Church at large is concerned. Infuse pastors with an unfeigned evangelistic passion. Train pastors in the fundamentals of a continuous, every-day evangelism. Give them a loose-leaf manual of suggestions for evangelism that work. Besides the pastors, instruct the churches in fundamentals, also.

14. Too much we have forgotten the Holy Spirit. Too little we depend upon Him and call upon Him for His work of bringing about conversion, salvation, and the new birth through repentance.

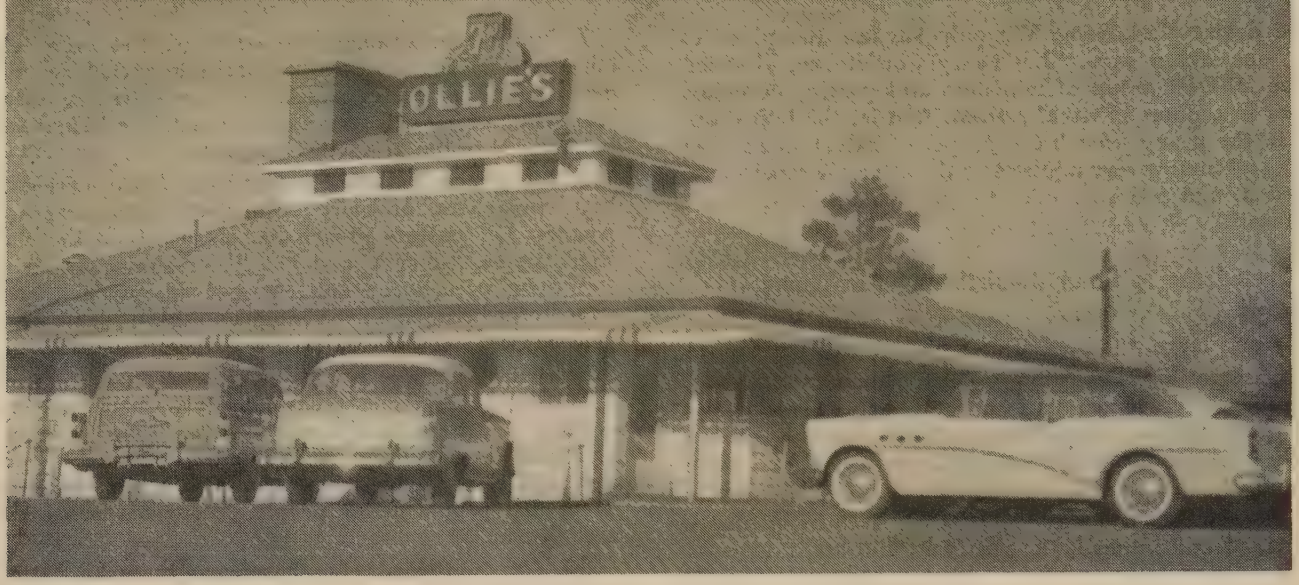
15. Let there be close cooperation between the General Board of Evangelism and the General Board of Lay Activities in Summer Conferences and Institutes. In this way laymen can be motivated in evangelism and trained in evangelistic methods.

16. Because thousands of Methodists move from rural communities to urban or suburban centers every year, let the urban churches incorporate within their philosophy the cultural values and the personal concern of the rural churches. Only thus can the thousands of Methodists moving from rural communities be made to feel at home in and become a part of the urban church.

17. Our turning to God must begin with editors, literature writers, and others like them who influence the people as a whole.

This, it seems, is a fair summary of what was written in answer to the question, "Which Way? What Next in Evangelism?" In this summary there is much food for thought—much for us as laymen and ministers, as Commissions and churches, and as Conferences to think about, pray about, and do about.

May God help us to be afraid of nothing but sin and of failing to do His will, and may He bring about in us to know and to do and to love His will. May we as individuals be persons after God's own heart. May The Methodist Church be God's Church.



A Modern Evangelist Distributes The Upper Room

William Chapell, assistant manager of Ollie's, stands behind the cash register. A wire rack holds copies of *The Upper Room*, and an open Bible, for sale at cost, may be seen in the show case.

To Satisfy His Customers' Spiritual Needs as well as their Physical Needs

IF you want good food, good service and a free copy of THE UPPER ROOM, stop at Ollie's Barbecue, 902 7th Avenue, South, Birmingham, Alabama.

This might sound only like an advertisement for a place of business, but it is far more. Ollie McClung could well say, "I work for God. I sell barbecue to pay expenses."

Conversion Changes Business

This young man was converted in 1946, and he and his wife try to pass on to others the joy of being Christians. They take seriously Christ's command to be His witness. Ollie said, "Upon my conversion I immediately quit selling alcoholic beverages in my restaurant and began to try to witness for Christ. It has been amazing the way the Lord has blessed our business since then. Each year as we have tried to contribute more to the work of the Kingdom of God, we have found that we had more for ourselves, proving one can't outgive God."

Family Devotions

"We have been using THE UPPER ROOM as our guide in our family devotions. We received such a blessing from it that I decided to give each of my employees a copy of every issue. Occasionally a customer saw me giving them out and asked for one, so I decided to have them on hand as a gift for any customer who wanted one. I have a wire

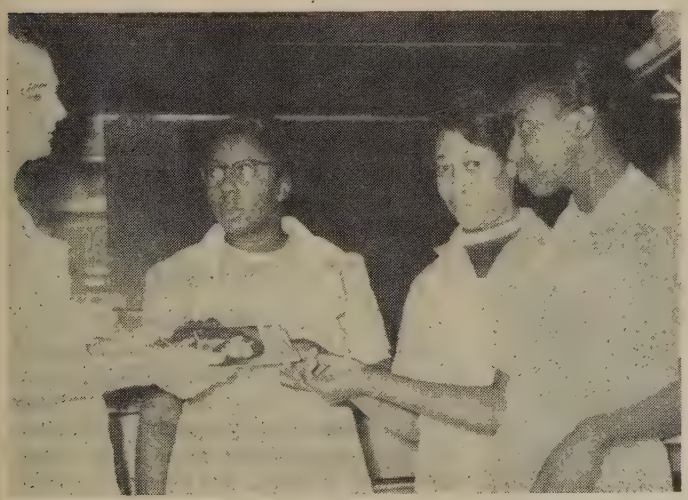
Match-book covers at Ollie's say, "If you never know me, you'll miss nothing. If you never know Christ, you'll miss everything." They also carry a verse of Scripture, as do the individual Domino sugar packages.

rack by the cash register and have a literature rack by each door where I give away religious tracts along with THE UPPER ROOM. We also sell American Bible Society Bibles at cost."

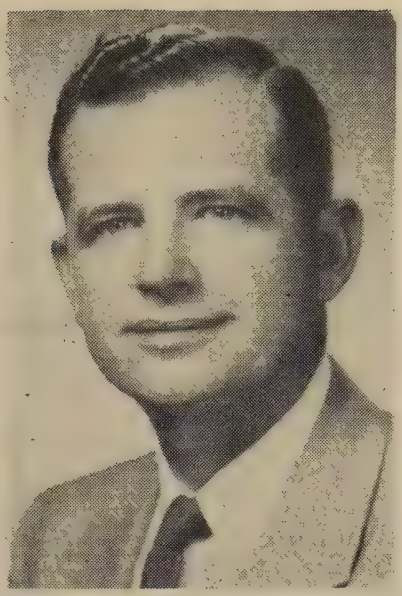
Cumberland Presbyterian Leader

Mr. McClung is an elder of the Crestline Cumberland Presbyterian Church, teacher of an adult class in the church school, and treasurer of the church. He is also a member of the Alabama-Mississippi Synodic Board of Missions and Secretary of the denominational Board of Missions.

This fine Christian goes a step further than just distributing religious literature in his place of business. When you pick up the familiar Domino individual package of sugar to sweeten your cup of coffee, you will find a verse of scripture printed on the back. And Ollie's match book covers say, "If you never know me, you'll miss nothing. If you never know Jesus Christ, you'll miss everything." And on the other side of the match book is the familiar verse John 3:16. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."



Copies of a new issue of *The Upper Room* have just arrived. Employees receive one from their employer, Mr. Ollie McClung.



Ollie McClung, owner of Ollie's Barbecue and leader in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Alabama-Mississippi Synod.

No one who eats at Ollie's Barbecue will be surprised to know that the bottom of his stationery carries the words, "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, 'It is more blessed to give, than to receive.' "

Mrs. McClung is arranging free copies of *The Upper Room* among the religious literature available in the rack by each door at Ollie's.

The Bible and Family Life

by
James V. Claypool
Secretary, Promotion of Bible Use
American Bible Society

EVANGELISM starts with one's own family. The first responsibility of adults is for their own children. Do a father and mother have any less heartache if they convert all the derelicts on "Skid Row" and yet lose their own child? What is there of soul-satisfaction if we gain for Christ all the Asiatics, Africans, Latin Americans, and Europeans and still lose our own sons and daughters?

Laymen love a preacher who can keep their young folks close to the church. They are loyal to their minister when he is successful in rebuilding a sanctuary, erecting a new educational unit, helping to settle a labor strike, or exemplifying an effective social gospel. But they love him most when he wins the allegiance of their children to Christ.

The current revival of interest in family-group devotions is centering on Bible reading. There is always something new in Bible reading. Sometimes it seems that the customary years of formal schooling do not leave a very great deposit of learning. If Bible knowledge is to stay with a person, it needs to be repeated, simplified, explained, and visualized.

Pattern and Discipline

While there may be no over-all formula for family Bible reading which fits all homes, there are some things to be taken into account by everyone. It is extremely important that home Bible reading is not a hit-and-miss proposition. It should follow a pattern. It should be marked by some degree of discipline. And, as far as possible, all members of the family should participate in the readings. It should not be a matter of parental leadership *for* the children instead of *with* them.

Families that cannot get together daily can usually meet together briefly at least once a week. Saturday evening seems to be the best time for this.

This practice is also good preparation for church services the following day. The Saturday night devotions can become something to which to look forward each week—something which the children do not want to miss.

In sharing the actual reading, it is wise to use the same selection for all, regardless of age. The two dangers in this practice, of course, are that the reading will require too much maturity or that the explanation will be oversimplified. There is no perfect adjustment between these; but, as a choice, it is better to lead a child on to something a little beyond his present grasp than to drop beneath his level of maturity.

Prayer should be short. So should the scripture reading whenever possible. A family should seldom read an entire chapter unless the chapter is of moderate length. A survey of the Bible reading habit of ministers in Sunday church services has revealed that the average length of the scripture reading at public worship is about 13 verses. This is a good norm for holding the attention of a family.

It is extremely important that home Bible reading follow a pattern and not be a hit-and-miss proposition. If Bible knowledge is to stay with a person, it needs to be repeated, simplified, explained, and visualized.

Family Survey

A few years ago a survey of early training in Bible reading was made of 900 students at the Moody Bible Institute. Bear in mind that these young people, all students preparing for Christian service, probably came from homes above the average in Christian devotional habits. Each was asked, "Was there family worship in your home at

any time during your childhood?" The answers revealed that

54% had Bible reading at the supper table, or in the evening.
46% had Bible reading around the table.
60% of the homes had consecutive Bible reading.
56% of the homes had no additional instruction besides the reading of the Bible.
33% of the homes used additional devotional books regularly or occasionally.
In 51% of the homes, father was the leader; in 30%, mother was the leader; and in 19%, they shared the leadership, or took turns.
76% had no Bible memorizing in their homes.
53% admitted rebelling against the procedure.

Reading the Bible with Children

Perhaps the reason that many people do not read the scripture to their children is that they do not read the Bible much themselves. Perhaps another deterrent to reading the Bible to or with children is that parents are afraid of the questions that may arise.

Children are trained largely by the conversation they pick up at home. Reference to and use of the Bible ought not to be allowed to occupy a secondary place. Bible reading will probably never become like the patent medicine described in the phrase, "children cry for it." But it can easily become a family practice anticipated with some degree of eagerness. Of many bonds of understanding between parents and children, Bible reading can become one of the strongest links. It should always be an enriching experience. The aim should always be religious. Historical, literary, and cultural phases should always be secondary.

Experiences associated with Bible reading at home should be pleasant. Bible reading should never be assigned as punishment. Love and desire are more important than facts and knowledge. We are wise to lead our children into an affection for the Bible even more than into learning individual truths from it or about it.

It is reported that 20 per cent of all American families move to a new home annually. With people on the move and settling in new localities, Bible reading is especially essential, even as it was in pioneer days when family roots were not firm. As was the case in frontier days, the Bible can again become the central book of the home.

Dangers and Advantages

More than a hundred years ago a noted Scottish divine concerned with family Bible reading, as we are today, set forth some dangers and advantages in Bible reading. He listed the dangers as formality, self-righteousness, careless reading, and "a yoke too heavy to bear." All these can be overcome.

In reading Old Testament stories, it is not necessary to be literal and verbatim. Strip the words down to the children's age level and vocabulary. Improvise. *Ad lib.* Make the reading a story-telling occasion. Scan ahead of time what you have chosen for the children so as to pare down names.

From the Old Testament it can be shown that men and women who love God are heroes. They can compete with the cowboys and legendary heroes of

today. Such a book as *The Story of the Bible for Children,* by W. R. Bowie, can be used along with the scripture. That is, such a book may be a supplement, not a replacement. Not only are illustrated New Testaments available, but individual books of the Bible can be secured economically in rotogravure, magazine style. Sherman and Kent's *Children's Bible* is as good now as it was a generation ago. The John C. Winston Company has brought out a new Bible for home use.

Allow the children to sit comfortably for the reading. Do not frown on interruptions, corrections, or questions. Do not hesitate to repeat readings. Add comments and a song when possible. Let there be prayer at the beginning or conclusion of the reading, usually the latter. Memorization is something which should come only after considerable Bible reading, not at the beginning of the practice.

Family Bible reading becomes a bridge of understanding. It tones up the atmosphere of a home. It is one of the ways in which Jesus stands at the door and knocks. Children should not be cheated of these divine visits of the Holy Spirit making them conscious of the presence of God. Through Bible reading the members of the family become more relaxed, more detached from immediate events, better able to see today in the perspective of tomorrow. They are pointed to what is lasting in life, rather than what is transitory; what is important, rather than what is trivial; what is vital and meaningful, rather than what is insignificant. They feel increasingly thankful for our Heavenly Father's constant guidance and care.

Guidance and Inspiration

Last fall, President Eisenhower said in a statement issued nationally, "All of us, of whatever religious belief, may well turn to the Bible for guidance and inspiration for the tasks which lie ahead. I hope that many individuals and many families will do so."

In addition to the volumes to which attention has been called above, help may be found in the following valuable publications of The Upper Room:

"How to Conduct Family Worship," by Guy and Oliver Black.
"The Marks of a Christian Home," by Werner.
"The Family Altar," by Short.
"Parents Do Teach Children," by Staples.

If you are fortunate enough to be able to find a *Children's New Testament in Plain English,* by Kingsley and Williams, latch on to it as a prize.

Know the Bible

Every adult among us should be thankful that he does not know the Bible only from Bible movies. It is said that, at the time the movie, "Samson and Delilah," came out, an enterprising book seller advertised: "You have seen the movie, now read the book. Buy a Bible."

Someone may take such an idea seriously. From the "Hollywood Reporter" comes this startling paragraph:

> Attention, movie reviewers and critics. Will you be embarrassed when DeMille's "The Ten Commandments" is previewed? Will you know all ten of them, or will you have to guess? Prepare now, at home, and be the only one in the theatre who can quote all ten of the Commandments. Read them tonight in Chapter 20, Verses 1 through 17, Book of Exodus. (P.S. You'll find Exodus in the Old Testament of the Holy Bible.)

Blood Donated for the Physical

The Upper Room for the Spiritual

Henri Harrell of Indianapolis, Indiana, said:
"Since I have been a member of The Upper Room Fellowship, I have received a great blessing from what other people have told me about the spiritual help they have had from reading this devotional guide. It is my joy to send 80 to 90 copies of every issue to my friends. Because of this, some mere acquaintances have become fast friends.

"Last August my family and I had the great pleasure and blessing of visiting The Upper Room Chapel in Nashville, Tennessee. I cannot find words to express the feeling we had when we stood at the altar and listened to Miss Campbell, the chapel hostess, give the interpretation of the wood carving of the Last Supper. We felt we were on holy ground and shall ever be grateful for the privilege."

A man who regularly gives to people a devotional guide to encourage family and private worship must be indeed a selfless person. Therefore, it was not surprising to find that the daily paper of Indianapolis carried a picture of Mr. Harrell the day he was forty, stating he had just donated his fortieth pint of blood to the Red Cross Blood Center. Many of Mr. Harrell's friends who first knew THE UPPER ROOM guide as a gift from this out-going Christian, now contribute to the Chaplains' Fund through The Upper Room Fellowship.

Mr. Harrell receiving congratulations when he gave his fortieth pint of blood on his fortieth birthday through the Red Cross Blood Center.

Henri Harrell of Indianapolis, Indiana, who distributes nearly a hundred copies of *The Upper Room* to friends every issue, is shown handing a copy to Mrs. Lucille Walker and Frank Stewart..

THE UPPER ROOM SAYS

"I Am Thinking of You"

"Nothing that is big enough to interest us is too small to interest our Heavenly Father," says a lady who lives in a home for aged women, as she explains that she feels she is guided in her choice of people to whom she sends gift subscriptions of THE UPPER ROOM.

She has a standing order of 30 which she scatters from Canada to the Gulf and the Atlantic to the Pacific. Explaining to her friends that each time their copy arrives it says, "I am thinking of you," she cleverly adds, "I write less and say more."

Only One Request

The one request she makes of her frineds is that the devotional guide be passed on to someone else. A number of people who have in this way seen a copy for the first time have become regular subscribers and send it to others. This gives the original donor joy, for she has great faith in the steadying influence of those who "Be still and know that I am God."

Every evening this devoted Christian reads THE UPPER ROOM to a blind lady who also lives in the Home. She relates how they talk together of the many people around the world reading the same meditation, with whom they feel a bond.

Prospective members and present members who have participated in the ten weeks' continuous membership course at Woodland Methodist Church.

A Ten-Weeks' *Continuous* Membership Course

by
Willard J. Rand, Jr.
Pastor, The Methodist Church
Woodland, California

Pastors are continually plagued about devising a membership training program which meets the needs of present and prospective members. In our Woodland Methodist Church we believe we have found an answer. It is a 10 weeks' *continuous* membership course.

The course is offered during the regular Sunday school hour and is taught by the pastor. It is open to all present members who feel they need a "refresher" course, to all prospective members, and to all officials and workers in the church.

Plans are being made so that eventually church school teachers can be released from their teaching responsibility for 10 weeks to take the course. Prospective members joining the Church on profession of faith are expected to take the course. Members being received on transfer from other denominations or from Methodist churches which offered no membership courses are encouraged to enroll.

The course is offered on a continuous basis. Except for special Sundays and the summer months, there will be no interruptions. Once the 10 weeks have been completed, the course begins again. In this manner those who have missed a session can make it up when the course is held next.

This kind of approach offers a church a chance to instruct both the present membership and the prospective membership. It provides a two-pronged approach to the matter of a trained church membership.

The Membership Manual for Youth and Adults, written by James Chubb, is the basic manual. However, it is supplemented by other materials, such as Smith's "Know Your Bible" Series; Bainton's *The Church of Our Fathers;* Episcopal address, 1952; Luccock's *Endless Line of Splendor; The Methodist Discipline;* and "The Methodist Social Creed."

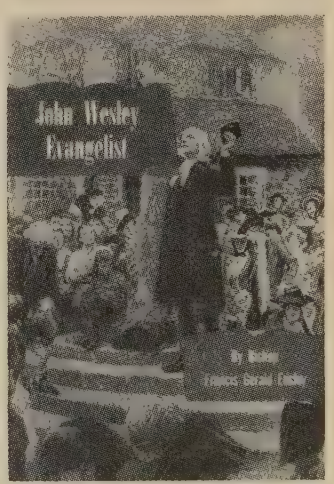
Tidings also recommends the following items for such a course: Chart, *Spiritual Life for Methodist Christians; The Methodist Primer,* by Bishop Charles C. Selecman; and "I Will Uphold the Church," by Homer J. R. Elford.

A Book to Thrill Every Methodist and to Inspire Every Christian

John Wesley, Evangelist

by Bishop Francis Gerald Ensley

A vivid portrait of Methodism's founder. ". . . interesting, informative, and presents John Wesley as a sane, practical evangelist."—*Berlyn V. Farris*



64 pages—35¢ each; 12 or more, 25¢ each

Order in Quantities for Your Church Families

TIDINGS, 1908 Grand Avenue Nashville 5, Tennessee

Good Training MAKES Good Members

A POET once said that "knowledge breeds contempt" in the world of romance. Whether that is so or not, the opposite is true when a person unites with the Church. It is a *lack* of knowledge which breeds carelessness, neglect, and inactivity. Ignorance of what it means to be a Christian and a member of the Church only undermines the vital glow of the Christian experience and leads to the neglect of church attendance and prayer.

Membership Important

Every person who indicates a willingness to unite with the Church has a moral right to know what he is expected to believe and what he is expected to do after he becomes a member.

Lodges and service clubs do not hesitate to demand that those who join their orders become intelligent concerning the truths which the particular organization seeks to propagate. Those who join such groups take it for granted that they will have to spend some time in gaining that knowledge. They expect certain processes of initiation before they can claim membership in the club.

If membership in Christ's Church is so unimportant that anyone can join without training or study, we can be absolutely certain that a large percentage of those received in such a manner will soon lose their interest in the Church and find it easy to discover excuses for not attending the services.

Every person who joins the Church—child, youth, or adult—should be given a period of training before being received into membership.

As this issue of SHEPHERDS goes to press, classes are being conducted for children and youth in thousands of Methodist churches. Only a small minority of the pastors have failed to recognize the responsibility which the law of the Church imposes upon them to train boys and girls in classes before receiving them into church membership.

Assimilating Adults

But what about the adults?

People who join the Church should know what its beliefs are, what its history has been, what its present program is, and what is expected of each one who assumes the privilege of membership.

These persons can be greatly helped by receiving three excellent books in the general area of churchmanship. The first is *The Beliefs of a Methodist Christian,* by Clinton M. Cherry. This book is inexpensive enough at 50 cents (12 or more, 35¢ each) to be made available to every adult. (It is not suitable for children and youth.) It presents a satisfying summary of the basic doctrines of The Methodist Church. The second is *The Methodist Primer,* by Bishop Charles C. Selecman. Both a guide to doctrine and a fine summary of Methodist history, this volume also sells for 50¢ per copy; 12 or more, 35¢ each. The third is "I Will Uphold the Church," by Homer J. R. Elford. This little booklet, selling at 10 cents a copy in single orders (12 for $1.00), presents the four obligations of the church member as expressed in prayer, presence, gifts, and service in such a manner that it cannot fail to inspire those who read or study it.

Fine Background

While there is no single book which completely satisfies the requirements for those preparing to unite with the Church, any one of these three—or preferably all of them —makes a fine background of material to meet the needs.

In addition to the above-mentioned books and pamphlets there are several other pieces of literature which are valuable to acquaint new people with the privilege which is theirs when they become members of Christ's Church. "What Every Methodist Can Do," by Harry Denman ($2.00 per 100) and "A Word to New Members," by Bishop W. E. Hammaker (10¢ each; 12 for $1.00) are two among many that will be useful for reading and for study. A very popular help is Ray Ragsdale's "Self-Help for New Members" (15¢ each; 10 or more, 10¢ each).

Invaluable in this connection is the Turn Over Chart, "Spiritual Life for Methodist Christians" ($12.00 per set). This chart is also available in booklet form at 35¢ each; 12 or more, 25¢ each.

Many pastors hesitate to request adults to attend classes because they fear that these adults will be lost to the Church because of unwillingness to comply. That may be true in situations where preparation for church membership has never been expected. In such places the pastor will need to lead the people step by step. At first he will put the invitation to learn more concerning the Church and the faith on the basis of choice alone. He will assume that the people want to attend; but he will indicate that it is a matter of free choice, that it is not a requirement, but rather an extra privilege which is given to them because of their decision to unite with the Church.

Varied Hours

Sometimes the classes will be held during the church school hour on Sunday morning. Sometimes they will be held in connection with the weekly prayer meeting, or in connection with another of the regular activities of the church. The time and place are not as essential as the need to be about the business of giving new members a glimpse of the glorious treasure which is theirs to claim when they enter the doors of the Christian Church.

Our Obligation to Non-Resident Members

by J. Lester McGee
Pastor, Quayle Memorial Methodist Church
Kansas City, Kansas

WITH Methodist membership reaching toward the ten million mark at a time of growing yet shifting population, it would probably be impossible to compile accurate statistics on that portion of our membership which is currently considered non-resident and consequently inactive.

Thousands of our members are moving every year and leaving their membership on the rolls of local churches while they remain unknown and unnoticed within shadows of other Methodist churches. Some ministers in our largest cities say that there are as many people in their cities belonging to Methodist churches elsewhere as the total membership of all the Methodist churches there.

Pastoral Care

In times past there has been discussion concerning the advisability of legislation that would automatically transfer a person's membership to his nearest Methodist church when he moves to another community. We suggest that it would be better if the General Conference would enact more explicit "pastoral care responsibility" legislation.

This "pastoral care" influence will bring about the transfer of the membership of a non-resident member of his own accord rather than by automatic legislation, and this will make for a happier relationship between the non-resident member and the new church which he joins. Moreover, it will strengthen the total idea of Methodism as a connectional church.

Full Responsibility

To effect such legislation, the Letter of Notification, now provided in the *Discipline* in ¶ 119, will need to be enlarged to include more specific pastoral care.

Under this new legislation the membership will still remain in the home church until the member has requested its transfer, but the church in the new community will have full responsibility for his pastoral care. When the non-resident member realizes that the church in his new community is looking after his spiritual interest as diligently as it is that of its own members, he will be more kindly disposed to it and more easily won to membership. Such a straightforward pastoral care ministry will have an appeal that no secondary relationship can offer.

Methodism should let it be known in all congregations that whenever Methodists move from one community to another, they should notify the minister of the church which they are leaving and give him their exact new address. Methodism might well have a "Card of Membership" which includes a statement of this policy. This should be presented to all members both old and new.

New Questions

A new Quarterly Conference question might be asked, as follows: "How many non-resident members have been referred to other Methodist churches for pastoral care? How many such referrals has this church received? Is this church extending pastoral care and endeavoring to win the transfer of membership?"

This question would make the church to which a member belongs responsible for notifying the church in his new community, and likewise would make

Non-resident members can be made active members when local churches take seriously the responsibility of relating them to the fellowship of Christ.

A Helpful Book

Basic Beliefs of the Christian Faith

by

Herbert W. Hahn

Brief, pointed explanations of Christian doctrines: God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, Prayer, the Bible, the Church, the Communion of Saints, the Forgiveness of Sins, the Kingdom of God, Immortality. Complete index of supporting scripture texts.

Ideal for
every member and
particularly helpful
for every new member

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the church in his new community responsible for his pastoral care.

If it is objected that such a plan will involve additional work for ministers and churches, it can be said that this additional work will do more to establish active membership of non-resident members than anything else.

Mechanics

Of course, it will be necessary to have mechanics for implementing the plan. We suggest the following:

1. That the General Board of Evangelism lead the entire Church in a one-month campaign to trace the whereabouts of all lost-sight-of members. It can compile and recommend a number of tested techniques for doing this, and give these techniques to the pastor and the local church Commission on Membership and Evangelism.

2. That every church compile a "members living elsewhere" list whose names and addresses will be referred to other churches for pastoral care.

3. That every church prepare a "pastoral care responsibility" list as a part of its constituency roll, comprising those persons referred to it by other churches.

4. That the necessary materials would be somewhat as follows:
   a. A printed letter to be mailed to all non-resident members by the churches holding their membership.
   b. A blank form for a church to use in referring its non-resident members to other churches for pastoral care.
   c. An acknowledgment blank attached to the referral blank, to be returned to the church which has made the referral.
   d. A "Pastoral Care Privilege Certificate" for use of the local church in greeting those persons referred to it for pastoral care.
   e. A blank form to be used by a church in removing an inactive member from its membership roll, in accordance with ¶ 125 of the *Discipline*.

5. That the Pastoral Care Procedure of the church in the community in which the member now lives be somewhat as follows:
   a. Let the church return the acknowledgment blank to the referring church.
   b. Let the church mail a letter of greeting and welcome to the new non-resident member in the community. Let it include with this letter a filled-out Pastoral Care Privilege Certificate.
   c. Let the minister make a pastoral call on the new person or family.
   d. Let a member of the Pastoral Care Committee, or similar committee set up under the direction of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism, visit the new person or family.
   e. Place the name and address of the new non-resident member on the church's mailing list to receive THE UPPER ROOM, the Church Bulletin, and other church mailings.
   f. Refer the name to proper church organizations for contact and cultivation.
   g. Offer opportunities for the new non-resident members to become acquainted and serve in the local church.
   h. Give the name to the Visitation Evangelism or Fishermen's Club group.
   i. Continue pastoral care and patient, persistent friendly cultivation.

6. When a local church knows of Methodists living in its community, whose names have not been referred to it by the churches where they hold their membership, it should request the home churches for Referral Certificates. The home church should cooperate and send the referrals in order to open the way for pastoral care and cultivation by the church where the member now lives. Effective care and cultivation would not otherwise be possible.

7. When a pastor knows in advance that a member is going to move, he should counsel with the member before he moves concerning transferring his membership or inviting the Methodist church in the new community to assume pastoral care responsibility.

Additional Features

This is the gist of the plan. Additional features could be added as deemed wise. Proper committees and commissions of the general Church could prepare the various letters and blank forms that are necessary in such a program.

No church could possibly lose by cooperating in such a program, but every church is losing without it.

Referrals without designated churches should go to District Superintendents (or to the General Board of Evangelism) in cases where the members have moved to large cities or to rural areas and the referring churches do not know the churches nearest the specified addresses. The District Superintendents will then exercise their best judgment and discretion in referring the names to the proper churches.

—Courtesy Three Lions

A Program for Pentecost

Sunday, May 20, is Pentecost Sunday. The observance offers a significant opportunity for every church to share once again the events by which the power of the Holy Spirit was made manifest in the lives of first-century Christians. But more than that, the day presents an opportunity for millions of Methodist Christians today to experience the living power of God as revealed in the working of the Holy Spirit.

The record of Pentecost in the New Testament suggests two purposes as central in the observance: 1. To receive God's gift of the Holy Spirit through prayer and worship; and 2. To give God's gift of the Holy Spirit through witnessing.

The record of the Acts of the Apostles makes it clear that these two purposes are inseparable. Those who merely bask in the glory of the Holy Spirit's presence without feeling an urgency to share the experience with others are certain to miss the dynamic of the early Christians as they went out from Pentecost to tell all the world of the Risen Christ and of His enduring presence in the hearts of those who love Him.

Pentecost is both waiting to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and giving away the gift of the Holy Spirit through witnessing.

Pentecost Sunday can be the greatest Sunday in the year because it extends the hope of Easter Day to all followers of Jesus Christ. It gives assurance to drive out doubt, hope to drive out despair, and strength to drive out weakness. It is the pledge of God's love for His children in the gift of His presence through the working of the Holy Spirit.

Program

The following program is suggested for the observance of Pentecost in 1956. It should, of course, be adapted to meet the needs of a local congregation. The program is divided into four parts. Each part is essential if the New Testament experience of Pentecost is to become a reality in the life of a congregation.

1. A Morning Watch Service or a Communion Breakfast. Such a service may be held at six, or seven, or eight o'clock in the morning. The important fact is that the hour should precede the usual Sunday program. The discipline involved in getting to a place of meeting at an early hour helps to create the atmosphere in which the experience of the early Christians can be recovered for our day.

The program for the Morning Watch Service should emphasize testimony and prayer. The people should be in the spirit of "waiting." Such a spirit is essential if the experience of the first Pentecost is to be repeated.

If a Communion Breakfast is planned, it will be helpful to concentrate upon the attendance of men. The Methodist Men's organization or organized Bible classes may serve as sponsors. Whatever order may be followed for the service, it should lead the people to expect God's presence to be revealed. It should create an atmosphere in which selfishness and self-seeking are unwanted and in which the individual is made ready to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The Morning Watch or Communion Breakfast are not designed primarily to capture the attendance of large numbers of people. The service should in-

clude those whose spiritual expectancy will create a channel through which the power of the Holy Spirit may come into their lives, and through them into the lives of all the members of the church.

2. A Great Service of Morning Worship, including a Roll Call of Members and a Reception of New Members. Pentecost is the birthday of the Church. The first Pentecost was the day when the fellowship was strengthened for all the trials which were to come. It was the time when followers of Jesus became aware of the quality in their faith which bound them together.

Stress the Fellowship

On Pentecost Sunday every leader in the church is privileged to stress the Fellowship. Many churches will plan a Roll Call of Members. Larger churches may find it necessary to conduct the roll call by using cards in the pews, or by placing in the vestibule charts which include the names of every member of the church and which may be checked by each member present. But there are values in reading aloud the name of every member of the church and giving an opportunity for every member to respond to his name.

As the fellowship of believers is stressed, it should be obvious that this will be the time when persons will be received into the church. In preparing for Pentecost Sunday, the minister and lay visitors will invite many individuals to use this appropriate service as the time to take their place in the church.

The sermon on Pentecost Sunday will stress the gift of the fellowship which results from such an experience.

Careful preparation and an emphasis upon the importance of every member being in his or her place in the sanctuary on Pentecost Sunday can make for a second Easter. The power is available at Pentecost; it is for us to invite men and women to receive it.

3. At Pentecost the early Christians felt an urgent need to witness. The observance of Pentecost in 1956 calls for a *Witness of the Spirit to the Unchurched by Visitation in the Afternoon.* After the Pentecost experience Peter could say, "Such as I have, I give." Without the urge to share the experience Pentecost loses its meaning. It is important to follow-up the earlier services of the day with a visitation upon the unchurched.

The visitation will be organized by the Commission on Membership and Evangelism. The prospects will be those which have been gathered in the weeks preceding Pentecost. The visitors may either assemble at the close of the morning service for brief instruction and for the distribution of names, or they may return later in the afternoon for more extended training.

In some churches visitation will be informal on Pentecost Sunday afternoon. Scores of people, filled with the power of God as experienced in the earlier services of the day, may be encouraged to go out and call upon friends, business associates, classmates in school, or neighbors to invite them to accept Christ.

Pentecost Sunday will lose much of its potential power if visitors are not inspired to go out to share the Good News as part of the observance of the day.

4. Evening Service in Sanctuary and in Homes Throughout the Parish. The observance of Pentecost will not be complete without an emphasis upon Pentecost in the home. The New Testament tells us that the Holy Spirit often came to people gathered in homes. "The Holy Spirit came upon them [in the home]," the record says in Acts 19:6.

Churches which regularly have an evening service will plan the music, the sermon, and the order of worship to stress the place of the Holy Spirit in a Christian home. It is suggested that members of the congregation go to selected homes throughout the parish after the evening service for a brief song and prayer period. People who did not attend the evening worship in the sanctuary should be encouraged to gather in a home in their neighborhood for this brief period of fellowship.

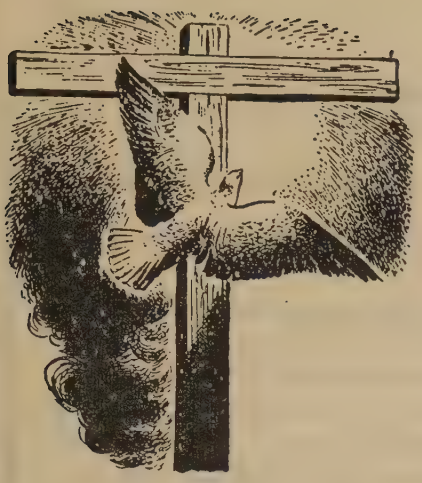
An Experience Recaptured

Churches which do not regularly have an evening service will find it profitable to select sufficient homes to serve the needs of every member of the church and to invite every member by letter and by personal contact to gather on Sunday evening in a home. Group leaders should be chosen to extend the invitation, and to plan the service. The booklet, *Recapturing Pentecost,* by Halford E. Luccock, is ideal for reading and discussion at such services.

Pentecost has often been merely a celebration of an event which took place in history. In 1956 it can be an experience recaptured. God is willing to give the gift of the Holy Spirit to all who will receive it. Let it be said of every congregation in The Methodist Church that the way has been prepared, and the people have been made ready. In such an atmosphere the Spirit will come; and power will fill the needs of every individual life, as well as every part of the church program.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. . . . And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. . . . Peter standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, . . . this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh. . . .

—Acts 2.



Pentecost—

Fifty Days of Vital Evangelism

THE CHRISTIAN PENTECOST is usually regarded as the birthday of the Church. Its celebration by all branches of the Church is based on the account in the second chapter of Acts, which tells of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the little band of Jesus' followers when they met after His Resurrection.

The origins of Pentecost go far back into Hebrew history. Connected with the giving of the Covenant to Noah and of the Law to the people of Israel through Moses, it is celebrated as the Jewish Feast of Weeks. In the old synagogues it was often marked by groups of people reading the scriptures all through the night. It is probably the oldest of all religious festivals still celebrated today.

Special Evangelistic Effort

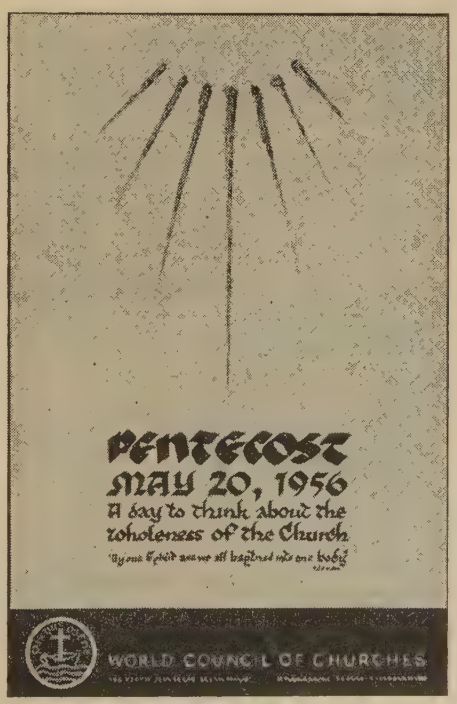
In the Christian calendar Pentecost became the most joyful season of the Church year, marked by special evangelistic effort. Often it was spoken of as Whitsunday (White Sunday) because of the white garments worn by the many candidates for baptism.

It is the special Church day mentioned in the New Testament. We read of Paul tarrying in Ephesus or hurrying to Jerusalem in order to be with the Christian brethren on Pentecost. This was at a time before either Christmas or Easter were celebrated as Christian holidays.

The World Council of Churches has found the Pentecost season an appropriate time to stress the world-wide ties of the individual Christian as well as of the local church. This again is based on the account in Acts telling how, after the descent of the Spirit, each man heard the word in his own tongue and the disciples set out on their evangelistic mission which was to "turn the pagan world upside down."

As is customary, the six Presidents of the World Council have issued a Pentecost message, which has been sent to all the member Churches of the Council—162 denominations in 47 countries—to be read in the churches on Pentecost Sunday. The message reads:

> Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
>
> As Presidents of the World Council of Churches we greet our brethren of the Churches participating in the World Council.
>
> A year ago at this time we were called to pray for God's blessing upon the coming General Assembly of the Council. Now, in retrospect, we can join in thanksgiving to God for the many blessings granted to us as a result of the Evanston Assembly. With frank and sincere facing of many differences there was revealed a deep underlying unity of Christian love and mutual understanding. Despite the barriers of space, of race, of nationality, of varying ecclesiastical traditions, and of theological emphasis we remain brothers in Christ. In this fact may be found a source of spiritual strength for the present and of high promise for the future.
>
> There are stern realities in our world which must be met courageously. There is strife between men and nations. In many places men do not have that freedom which is their deep desire. Millions of the children of God are without the barest necessities of life. We dare not forget the plight of those who, through no fault of their own, are helpless refugees. Christendom is divided and therefore its witness is weakened.
>
> But these difficulties are accompanied by equally real opportunities. Countless men, women, boys, and girls everywhere stand in need of the unsearchable riches of the gospel and of the peace of God which passes all understanding. In the light of the tragdy of our times there is urgent need for groups of men and women everywhere working more closely together in Christian love in the service of Christ.
>
> We may well ask ourselves: "Who is sufficient for these things?" The answer comes from our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ: "Ask and ye shall receive, knock and it shall be opened unto you."
>
> So, at this season of Pentecost, let us pray that the Holy Spirit make our hearts burn within us so that we may better understand the mind of Christ and more deeply realize our need of one another. Let us pray especially that all men may be granted the opportunity to worship the Almighty in full freedom. And let our prayer be accompanied by a solemn rededication of our lives to the gracious purpose of God.
>
> We urge the offering of this age-old prayer to God through Jesus Christ:
>
> Veni Creator Spiritus
> Come Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
> and lighten with celestial fire.
>
> (signed) The Presidents of the World Council of Churches



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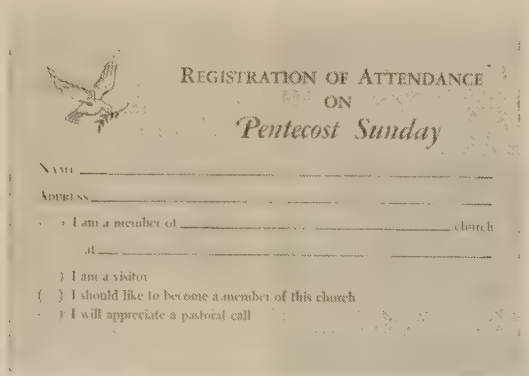
REGISTRATION OF ATTENDANCE
ON
Pentecost Sunday

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

( ) I am a member of _____ church

at _____

( ) I am a visitor

( ) I should like to become a member of this church

( ) I will appreciate a pastoral call

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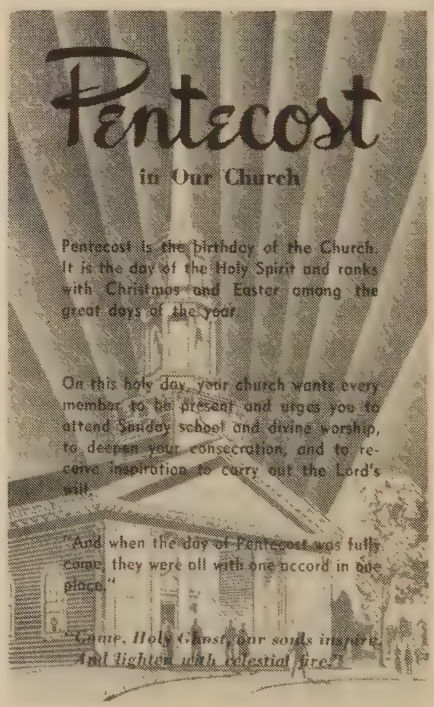
Pentecost
in Our Church
Pentecost is the birthday of the Church. It is the day of the Holy Spirit and ranks with Christmas and Easter among the great days of the year.
On this holy day, your church wants every member to be present and urges you to attend Sunday school and divine worship, to deepen your consecration, and to receive inspiration to carry out the Lord's will.
"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place."
"Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
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